Imprimatur,

Ex. Æd. Lamb.
Nov. 2. A. D.
1685.

Guil. Needham R. R^mo.
in Christo P. ac D.D.
Wilhelmo Archi-Ep.
Cant. a Sacr. Dom.

A TREATISE OF THE NECESSITY OF Restitution.

By William Smythies Curate at St. *Giles Cripplegate.*

LONDON,
Printed by T. Milbourn, and are to be Sold by *John Southby*, at the *Harrow* in *Cornhill*. 1686.

UMI -

TO

My ever Honoured Friend

Mr. *Francis Pargiter*

Merchant in LONDON.

Most Honoured Sir,

IT *is not without some fear of your displeasure, that I have made this Dedication to you, although I have design'd nothing by it, but such an Expression of my grateful acknowledgments, as I am able to return to you.*

You cannot imagine (Worthy Sir) but I must have a very great Reverence and Honour for you, considering how sensible I am of your great Piety, which appears by your daily Publique Devotions to GOD: *Of your great*

Charity in the several Sums which you are pleased secretly to convey to the Necessitous; as well as by the many beneficial kindnesses, which I have received to my self.

I know that in a censorious Age you do not expect to be freed from Calumnies, and I am well assured, that you are very little concern'd at them. Some have accus'd you of living a retired Life, for the Love of this present World: *But both your Piety, and your Charity shewes, that it is for the Love of Heaven: that you might be at leisure to* Delight your self in the Almighty, *and that, by the right improvement of your Riches, you may lay up a* Sure Foundation against the time to come, and take hold on Eternal Life. *It appears, that you account*

account the Honours of this Life (which might have been heaped upon you in this City) to be Incumbrances, *and that like* Mary, *you have* Chosen the better part: *to attend upon the Word, and Ordinances of your Saviour, the Benefit of which shall never be* taken from you.

I have another Inducement to desire your acceptance of this Treatise, viz. *The occasion I have taken in it to Vindicate and commend the* **French Protestants**, *to whom you have been a bountiful Benefactor.*

I know Sir that you do not question my faithfulness in the disposal of that which is committed to me, and I hope that this Treatise will confirm that good Opinion with which you and some others have been pleased to honour

me, notwithstanding some Aspersions which have reproached me. But that which I fear, is, that I shall be accounted unfaithful, and exceedingly blame-worthy for discovering any Person that hath entrusted me; without his leave. To this I must Answer, That I do seriously think that such a publication as this may really tend to a general good, and therefore I hope it will not be taken unkindly.

I am afraid lest you, and many more Charitable Men should lay a greater stress upon those Words of our Saviour, Give thy Alms in secret, &c. *than ever he intended, and thereby forget that which he said before in the same Sermon,* Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorifie

fie your Father which is in Heaven. *This is doubtless the general rule that every good Christian should observe, by which he prevents the sin of a great many (who are Slanderers of those whose worth they do not know; which is greatly offensive to God) And by which he becomes an apparent credit to our Religion, and a worthy Example by which others are* Provoked to good Works. *That which our Saviour spake of* Giving Alms in secret, *was upon a special occasion relating to the vain Ostentation of the* Pharisees; *and we are to understand no more by it, than that every Christian should be satisfied in his own mind, that though he may do good before Men, yet his design is not to be seen of Men: That he aimes at the Glory of God by it,*

it, and not to receive Glory from Men. I have often thought, that if some Charitable Men whom I have known, had discovered to others their designs of doing good, they might by their perswasions and examples have been wonderful advancers of good Works. And I heartily wish that what I have here publiquely offer'd to you, may remove this mistake, which will be to the great benefit of those that are necessitous. Besides, there is now a greater need of it than former Ages have produced, because of the great relief which the French Protestants may expect, and do most highly deserve from us.

We have, of late, a Cloud of Witnesses; neer Two Hundred Ministers, who have been forced to leave all that

was

was dear to them for the ſake of their Religion: Men of great Learning, and of moſt ſweet and obliging Tempers and Diſpoſitions. There are many Perſons likewiſe who were very conſiderable for the Riches of this World, but like the true Diſciples of our Lord, have left all for his ſake. The Condition of thoſe that are left behind is unſpeakably ſad, as every meſſage from thence tells us; many Thouſands are ſhut up in Priſon, and others endure ſuch extremities, that they Long for Death, but it cometh not.

I have received an account of ſuch Inſtances of cruelty as may be grievous to common humanity (I will not ſay to commit them, but ſo much as) to mention them. But, in hope that a Narrative of all their ſufferings will be pre-

par'd

par'd by a far better hand, I shall at present wave that doleful Subject.

I pray GOD of Heaven move the hearts of all English Protestants, *to Succour & Relieve those whom GOD hath sent hither; And prolong your Life to do more good to them and others here on Earth, before he receives you to his Heavenly Kingdom. This must be the Prayer of many who know you not, as well as of*

Sir

Cripplegate, *Dec.* 8th. 1685.

Your most Obliged and Thankful Servant,

W. Smythies.

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BOOKS

BOOKS Sold by *John Southby* at the *Harrow* in *Cornhill*.

Dr. *Falkners* two *Treatises*, the 1*st*. concerning *Reproaching* and *Censure*; the second an *Answer* to Mr. *Serjeant's Surefooting*. To which are annexed three Sermons, useful for these Times. in 4to.

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ERRATA.

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THE NECESSITY OF Restitution.

AMongſt all the Miſeries which ſinful Men bring upon themſelves, I know none greater, nor leſs conſidered by them, than thoſe which proceed from unjuſt and fraudulent actions. There are ſeveral ſorts of Men who pretend to great Piety, but are dreadfully forſaken of common Honeſty. And there are many more who expect, that God ſhould

have mercy upon their Souls, although they die in the wrongful poſſeſſion of other Mens Eſtates. They hope for the Kingdom of Heaven, becauſe they are Chriſtians, when there are thouſands of Heathens that are not ſo far from it. To the end therefore, that Men may neither deceive others by taking or withholding their Right from them; nor deceive themſelves by the vain hopes of expecting any Bleſſing or Mercy from God, whileſt they detein that which is not their own; I have thought fit to Publiſh this ſmall Treatiſe of Reſtitution, in which I ſhall Conſider:

1. What *Reſtitution* is.
2. The Abſolute and Indiſpenſable Neceſſity of it.
3. The Perſons from whom God requires it.
4. To whom it muſt be made.
5. What Rules and Directions, as alſo what Councel and Advife is fit to be given concerning it.

I. What *Reſtitution* is. Of this I ſhall give but a brief account, becauſe it is far better known than practiced amongſt

amongſt unjuſt Men. In General, it is a full recompence or ſatisfaction made for any wrong or injury that is done to another, where the Perſon offending hath not that *in ſpecie* which he hath taken away, the return of which is *Reſtitution* in the moſt ſtrict and proper ſenſe. More particularly it ſuppoſeth theſe five things:

1. It ſuppoſeth a wrong really done. He that *Deſigns* the injury of another, hath *Sinned againſt God in his Heart*, and muſt begg his pardon. He ſhall do well likewiſe (and it may very much conduce to the Peace of his Mind) to ask *His* forgiveneſs, to whom the injury was intended, and deſire his Prayers to God for him; but there is no amends required where wicked Intentions do not proceed to Injurious Actions.

2. It ſuppoſeth the Perſon offending to know of the wrong that he hath done, and that it was either through his wilfulneſs, or through his careleſneſs that his Brother ſuffered by him. A Man may do an injury ignorantly, and through inadvertency and never know of it; in which caſe there is no *Reſtitution* required. *De non apparentibus,*

bus, &c. Things that appear not, are as if they were not. I mention this for the sake of melancholly Persons, such as are apt to be surprized by needless and causeless fears.

3. It supposeth the Person offending to know the value, or to be able to make some estimate of the wrong that he hath done. If he doth not know nor can find by enquiry all the injury that he hath done (which is a case too common) he is to make as just an estimate as he can, and restore accordingly, and in so doing he may obtain forgiveness from God. If any shall say, it is well for unjust Persons if they have bad memories, by which they may spare their purses, I must tell them, that they know not what repentance is by which Restitution is produced, of which I shall speak in its proper place.

4. It supposeth ability to restore either in whole or in part. Where there is no Ability, there must be a true and sincerely Penitent Acknowledgment to the offended Person, with a faithful promise to restore if ever he be able.

5. *Resti-*

5. *Reſtitution* ſuppoſeth a voluntary act, and that it be not by any compulſion. When a Theif is taken, and the Goods forced out of his hand: Or, when a Man is compelled by the Law to make Satisfaction for the wrong that he hath done, this is not *Reſtitution* properly called, which is produced by that Repentance which cleares the Sinners mind from the guilt of what he hath done.

II. I am to ſhew the abſolute and indiſpenſible Neceſſity of Reſtitution, which is very little conſidered in the World. The neceſſity of it will appear under theſe four Heads.

1. God doth ſtrictly require it.
2. He ſeverely Puniſhes the Sinner that neglects it.
3. He accepts of no ſervice till it be performed.
4. There can be no true Repentance, and conſequently no Salvation without it.

1. God doth ſtrictly require it. There is *Neceſſitas precepti*. He that thinks he need not make Reſtitution

for the wrong that he hath done, may as well ſay, there is no neceſſity of doing that which the great Law-giver doth command to be done.

1. The Law of Nature requires it, which is the firſt and great Law; the Law of God imprinted in us, and therefore muſt not be contradicted. Gods revealed Law Written at firſt in Tables of Stone, hath not ſuch a deep impreſſion as his Law Written in our Hearts. His revealed Law was given to us by Men, but the Natural Law is engraven in our minds, by himſelf.

If there ſhould be a Law, that a Man may ſteal or keep away the Right of another Man, and we could ſuppoſe him that Proclaimes this Law to be able to do a thouſand Miracles for the Confirmation of it; yet would it ſignifie nothing, becauſe the Principles of Juſtice and Uprightneſs are inſeparable from a Mans Reaſon and Underſtanding.

There is no Heathen ſo Barbarous, but he knows that every Man ought to enjoy that which is his own. And if any be guilty of wronging their Neighbours, they have been under the

the juſt apprehenſions of Divine Vengeance.

The Example of the *Ninevites* in this Caſe is very remarkable. They were Heathens to whom God ſent the Prophet *Jonah* with a dreadful Meſſage, that after *Fourty dayes* they ſhould *be deſtroyed*. The People believed the Prophet. A Faſt was Proclaimed. The King conſulting with the Nobles, his Privy Councel, what might be the cauſe of Gods diſpleaſure; Proclaim'd (not only that *Man and Beaſt* ſhould *Faſt and Cry mightily* to God, but) that every Man ſhould *turn from the evil of his way, and from the Violence that was in his Hands:* Or, as the Word is properly rendered. *In the hollow of his Hands*, Jonah 3. 8. The meaning is, that which they had wrongfully taken and kept from the Owner. The *Hebrews* underſtood this to be meant of ill-gotten Goods which the *Ninevites* had deteined; and for *That* it was that they expected God would deſtroy them. This is the only ſin that is mentioned in the Kings Proclamation, and it is obſervable, that he doth not think it enough, in Conſultation with his Nobles, to ſpeak in general terms; *Let*

them turn every one from the Evil of his way, which had been comprehenſive of any wrong done to Men; but he makes particular mention of it, *And from the Violence that is in their hands*, that is, from the Right of others which was forcibly deteined from them. The *Marriners*, when *Jonah* fled from *Tharſhiſh*, caſt lots, that they might know for whoſe ſake it was that the Tempeſt came at *Sea*; But the *Ninevites* knew very well for what it was, that their Deſtruction was threatned at *Land*: they had done wrong, and muſt make Reſtitution. *Rapta reſtituat ſine quo non eſt vera penitentia*, is the account which *Grotius* and others give of that place. Let every one reſtore that which he hath taken away, without which there is no Repentance. This was the ſence which thoſe Heathens had of their duty as well as of their danger. *Nineveh* was a great City in which there were many Rich Merchants, and other traders who had *gotten Riches, but not by Right*; and now that they were in danger of Deſtruction, the King and Nobles conſidered it to be ſo great a provocation, that how many ſoever they were that had done wrong, every one muſt reſtore,

ſtore, or take that courſe concerning it, by which it might appear that they were ſenſible of, and ſorrowful for ſo great a ſin, as the taking or keeping away the Right of another. *Let every one turn from the evil of his way, and from the Violence that is in his Hands.*

Next to the caſe of the *Ninevites*, I may mention that Reſtitution made by an Idolater, which the Scripture likewiſe gives an account of, *Jud.* 17. *Micah* ſtole from his Mother an Idolatreſs, *Eleven hundred ſhekels of Silver.* She knew not who had it, but curſed him who ever he was. *Micah* being conſcious to himſelf of what he had done, and how juſtly he might expect the *Curſe* to fall upon him, Reſtored the Silver again. His Mother underſtanding that her Son had it, thought it to be in a very good hand, inſomuch that ſhe *Bleſſed* him, and deſired him to keep it. But he being ſenſible of the baſeneſs of having that in his hand, which he had unlawfully taken, and knowing how much he deſerved the Curſe rather than the Bleſſing, reſolves to be rid of it, when it was become Lawful for him to keep it. *When he had reſtored the Eleven hundred Shekels*

of

of Silver to his Mother, his Mother ſaid, I had wholly dedicated the Silver unto the Lord from my hand, for my Son to make a Graven Image and a Molten Image. Now therefore I will reſtore it unto thee. Yet he reſtored the Money unto his Mother. Whatever miſtake *Micah* was guilty of in his Idolatrous Worſhip of God, he was not miſtaken in the neceſſity of reſtoring that which he had wrongfully taken away.

The *Turkiſh* Religion doth likewiſe very ſtrictly require *Reſtitution.* Whatever *Mahomets* honeſty was, he had more Witt than to think that he could eſtabliſh a Religion, which ſhould Prevail in the World, if it gave the leaſt encouragement to any to hope for happineſs, that deteined the Right of other Men. His Law is, *If any Man hath any ill-gotten Goods in his poſſeſſion, he muſt make ſpeedy ſatisfaction; and if he be not able, he muſt give the Owner a Bill under his hand, to reſtore it ſo ſoon as he is able.* If he had allowed of doing wrong, or declared *Reſtitution* to be unneceſſary, his Religion would have ſtunck in the World, as he did ſoon after he left it.

We

We have a remarkable inſtance of one *Selymus* a *Turkiſh* Emperor; who lying upon his death Bed, *Pyrrhus* one of his *Baſhaws* came to him and advis'd him, for the quieting his tormented mind, to beſtow the wealth which he had wrongfully taken from the *Perſian* Merchants, upon an Hoſpital for the Poor. But that would not ſatisfie his guilty Conſcience when he was dying, and therefore he required that the Money ſhould be returned to the Merchants themſelves, ſaying, *They are without the Obedience of God, that do not repent and reſtore.* He that thinks he may do wrong and dye in peace, though he never makes *Reſtitution*, may learn better things of Heathens, Idolaters and *Turks*, who have the Law of Nature to command them.

2. It is againſt the revealed Law of God, which is chiefly a confirmation of the Law of Nature, and an additional Obligation to the performance of it.

Reſtitution is implyed in the Eighth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.* If a Man may not ſteal, that is, do any wrong, or uſe any deceit (for the Commandment is a prohibition of all unjuſt

unjuſt dealings) I am ſure he muſt re-reſtore that which he hath ſtolen or wrongfully taken from another. It is likewiſe a very plain and undeniable Inference from the tenth, *Thou ſhalt not covet*; for if I muſt not covet my Neighbours goods, I muſt much leſs keep them from him.

But beſides what we may conclude from theſe, we find particular and very ſtrict Laws for *Reſtitution*. They were given to the *Iſraelites* of Old, that they might not offer to call themſelves Gods People, and do wrong one to another.

There were Laws of *Reſtitution* for *Theft*, according to the aggravation of the crime, *Exod.* 22. 1. *If a Man ſhall ſteal an Ox or a Sheep and kill it, or ſell it, he ſhall reſtore five Oxen for an Ox, and four Sheep for a Sheep.* God was pleaſed to ſhew ſo much regard to the injured Perſon, that he did not only command a ſatisfaction to be given to him for what he had loſt, but likewiſe the advantage of that penalty which was inflicted upon the Offender. Oxen were more profitable and ſerviceable than Sheep, and therefore the greater Reſtitution is required.

In

In caſe of Houſe-Breakers, *ver.* 2. If the *Thief* was taken in the *Dark* and were killed, there was no Blood to be ſhed for him: for which amongſt other reaſons this is given for one, that it was poſſible for him to eſcape in the Dark, and to carry away the goods that he had taken, ſo that the owner could never have any *Reſtitution*. But if the Sun were riſen by which he might be apprehended, he was then to *reſtore double*, *ver.* 3. And if he were not able, he was to be ſold into Bondage.

It is ſaid, *Prov.* 6. 31. *If a Thief be found, he ſhall reſtore ſeven-fold, he ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe*; which may ſeem very ſevere, conſidering that *Solomon* ſpeaks in the former verſe of a Thief that ſteals to ſatisfie hunger: and it ſeems to contradict the other Laws, there being no mention made by *Moſes* of ſuch a *Reſtitution*. Some ſay that *Solomon* ſpeaks only of the *Theif* taken in the Night, and that there was therefore ſuch a ſevere *Reſtitution*, becauſe it was Lawful to have killed him. Others by [Seven-fold] underſtand only that he ſhould make a plentiful *Reſtitution*, becauſe the

the number [Seven] is one of thoſe numbers which is frequently underſtood indefinitly, for an uncertain number. Other opinions there are concerning it, but it belongs not to my preſent purpoſe to take notice of them. 'Tis enough that God required very ſtrict *Reſtitution* from him that took away the Right of another Man.

In the Book of *Leviticus*, we find ſuch Laws as are fit for all deceitful Tradeſmen, as well as others, to look into, *Chap.* 6. 2. *If a Soul ſin, and commit a treſpaſs againſt the Lord, and lye unto his Neighbour in that which was delivered to him to keep, or in a Fellowſhip*; that is, as you may ſee in the Margent, in his dealing with him, *Or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his Neighbour, or have found that which was loſt, and lieth concerning it, and ſweareth falſely—— Then ſhall it be, that becauſe he hath ſinned and is guilty, that he ſhall reſtore that which he took Violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten; or that which was delivered to him to keep, or the loſt thing which he found, or all that about which he hath ſworn falſly, he ſhall even reſtore in the principal, and ſhall add*

the

the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth. This was the *Reſtitution* which he was to make in caſe he voluntarily confeſſed the wrong that he had done, and was not by diſcovery compelled to it; for then he was to pay *double*.

I know very well, that unjuſt and fraudulent Perſons will ſay, that thoſe Laws do not now bind, becauſe there is an alteration of Diſpenſations. It is true, that the Penalties of theſe Laws are altered. And it is true, that thoſe Laws belonged to the *Jews*: Yet the moral Equity of them, upon which they are founded, do ſtill remain, and therefore they are of ſufficient force to prove it to be the declared Will of God, that if any Man hath done wrong he ſhall reſtore. *Reſtitution* is likewiſe required in the New Teſtament, in that plain Command of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 13. 7. *Render to every Man his due.*

As there are Scripture-Precepts, ſo are there likewiſe Scripture-Precedents very worthy our Obſervation.

Good Men of old, did not think they could have the Bleſſing of God in this World; much leſs that they could go out of it in peace, if they de-

deteined the Right of other Men. And on the contrary we find, that their uprightneſs towards Men, was a great cauſe of their Rejoycing, when they were to appear before God.

Remarkable in the firſt place, is the Inſtance of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. 2, 3—*I am Old and Gray-headed, and behold my Sons are with you, and I have walked before you from my Childhood unto this day. Whoſe Ox have I taken? Or whoſe Aſs have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppreſſed? Or of whoſe hands have I received a Bribe to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will reſtore it you.* This Appeal which *Samuel* made, was before a great convention upon a ſolemn occaſion, *viz. The making of a King before the Lord in Gilgal*, where 'tis ſaid, *All Iſrael were met together*, chap. 11. 15. *Samuel* being now ready to leave the World, knew that he could not die in peace, if, in any capacity, he had wronged any Man, and did not reſtore; and therefore deſires that all that knew him would deal faithfully with him. He appeals to them in reference to his common capacity as he was a Man, and had his Converſation amongſt them. *Whoſe*

Ox

Ox have I taken? Or whoſe Aſs have I taken? Oxen and Aſſes were very ſerviceable Creatures, and therefore the fault would have been the greater, if by any kind of injuſtice or deceit he had deprived Men of them. In the next Words, *Whom have I defrauded?* He makes a general appeal which comprehends the ſmalleſt injuries. It is as if he had ſaid, If any of you know that I have, in any caſe, done the leaſt wrong to the meaneſt Man, Let me know of it, and I will reſtore. He knew fraud to be ſo baſe a thing, and ſo contrary to the common Principles of Mankind, that he abhorred the leaſt guilt of it. The Son of *Syrach* gives this account of it, *Eccleſ.* 46. 19. *Samuel before his long ſleep made Proteſtation in the ſight of the Lord and his Anointed, that he took no ſubſtance of any Man, no not ſo much as a ſhoe, and no Man could accuſe him.* He appeals to them likewiſe, in reference to his *Magiſtracy.* He had now newly reſign'd his Office as a Judge; and if any Man could accuſe him, they might do it without any fear or dread of his Authority. *Of whoſe hand have I received a Bribe to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will reſtore it you.* It appears, that

there had been corrupt Magiſtrates in thoſe dayes. And doubtleſs it is not in the power of the moſt juſt and upright Princes alwayes to make choice of ſuch as will not be guilty of Bribery. But it was *Samuels* comfort that he was none of them, and that his conſcience was clear from any ſuch dreadful accuſaſion. He knew very well that a corrupt Judge is in a thouſand times worſe condition than the vileſt Malefactor that ever ſtood before him, or was condemned by him. Men of low degree cannot commit ſuch ſins as thoſe who are in great and publick Truſts. A Bribe to a Judge to pervert the Law! It is ſuch a dreadful thing, that he muſt be a hardned ſinner, that doth not tremble at the thoughts of giving it, and therefore he may well tremble that ſhall dare to take it.

Hiſtories tell us of Heathen Kings and Emperours, who did ſo abhor Briberie, that they thought no ſeverity could be too great for him that ſhould be guilty of it. Amongſt many Inſtances, I will mention but this one. *Cambyſes* King of *Perſia* diſcovering that *Syſamnus* one of his Judges had taken a Bribe, he commanded him to be put to death: His Skin

Skin to be flayed off, and the Judgment Seat to be covered with it: And then made choice of his Son to ſucceed him, that ſitting in the Court of Judicature, upon his Fathers Skin, he might look to his own; for the King told him, that if he committed the ſame ſin he muſt expect the ſame Puniſhment.

I will add another Inſtance of one who was not a *Pagan* Prince, which I received from a Miniſter whoſe Brother was preſent at that time; and if I miſtake not, an eye Witneſs of the whole tranſaction, or at leaſt of the Tragick part of it.

The Emperor of *Moſcovie* being informed, that one of his Judges had taken a Bribe, which was a *Gooſe* with its Belly full of Gold, commanded him and the other Judges to appear before him, not diſcovering the leaſt diſpleaſure. When the Judges were cheerful in his preſence, he commanded the Hangman to be brought in, and asked him if knew how to cut up a Gooſe, to which he replied, That he could do it very well. The Emperor then commanded him to take away that Judge and cut him up after the ſame manner: Which was forthwith done accordingly.

Bribery is not only a thing horribly Wicked in the ſight of God, but likewiſe ſo baſe, and low, and ſordid in the ſight of Men, that if any Magiſtrate whatſoever can be ſo corrupt as to be guilty of it, either to puniſh the Innocent or acquit the Guilty, it muſt be kept cloſe, and delivered to him with great Secrecy, *A Wicked Man taketh a Guift out of the Boſome to pervert the wayes of Judgment.* Prov. 17. 23. Or elſe he muſt have a Servant (of whom he hath good aſſurance that he will be Faithful to the Devil, and his Maſter who employ him) to take the Bribes under the Notion of a reward to himſelf.

Samuel appeals to all *Iſrael*, amongſt whom there might be many that had been his Servants and inferiour Officers, who knew that if they had taken a Bribe to blind their Maſters Eyes they muſt never ſee his Face. He was careful that men ſhould be puniſhed for their crimes without any partial reſpect to their outward eſtate and condition in the World. His innocency makes this appeal; for if he had been guilty, 'tis moſt probable that he would have died a hardned ſinner. If Magiſtrates who have a great truſt committed

mitted to them, and who are ſaid in the Scripture to *Judg*, *Not for Man but for God*, ſhall be perverted by Bribes, it may well be expected that they ſhould be found amongſt the number of thoſe that have forſaken God, and are forſaken by him, and conſequently that they ſhould never repent and reſtore.

We have likewiſe a very remarkable inſtance of *Reſtitution* in the Book of *Nehemiah*, chap. 6. 11. 12, 13. There was a dreadful complaint in the beginning of the Chapter. After the *Jews* were returned from captivity, they were forced to part with their Lands and Vineyards: Nay, their Children were pawned that they might have Bread to eat, *They took up corn for them*, v. 5. Theſe and many more complaints which we there find, were occaſioned by the unjuſt exactions of their Brethren, and the unreaſonable advantages, which they made of their neceſſitous condition. Hereupon *Nehemiah* was exceedingly diſpleaſed, and ſaid, *v.* 9. *It is not good that yee do: ought yee not to walk in the fear of our God, becauſe of the reproach of the Heathen our Enemies?* Where note, that all unjuſt actions are inconſiſtent with the fear of God. They are likewiſe a reproach to that Re-

ligion which men profeſs, eſpecially when thoſe that are of the ſame Religion exact from one another. There was no way to take off that reproach from the Men of the True Religion but by *Reſtitution*. And therefore *Nehemiah* requires, that it may be done with all poſſible ſpeed, v. 11. *Reſtore I pray you unto them, even this day, their Lands, their Vineyards, their Oliveyards, and their Houſes, & alſo the hundredth part of their Mony*, viz. That which they had taken upon unlawful Uſury, *and of the Corn, the Wine and the Oyl that ye exact of them. Then ſaid they, we will reſtore them, and will require nothing of them, ſo will we do to them as thou haſt ſaid. Then I called the Prieſts, and took an Oath of them that they ſhould do according to this promiſe. Alſo I ſhook my lap and ſaid, So God ſhake out every Man from his Houſe, and from his Labour that performeth not this promiſe. And all the Congregation ſaid Amen, and praiſed the Lord; and the People did according to this Promiſe.* By this we may conclude what a deep ſenſe the Rich Men had of the ſinfulneſs of exaction, as well as the poor had of the Benefit of *Reſtitution*, in that *they All ſaid Amen, and praiſed the Lord.*

In

In the New Teſtament we have likewiſe the inſtance of *Zachæus*, who ſhewed the Truth of his converſion by his readineſs to *Reſtitution*, *Luk.* 19. 8.—*And if I have taken any thing from any Man, I reſtore four fold.* And thereupon at the next verſe, *Jeſus ſaid unto him, this day is Salvation come to this Houſe, foraſmuch as he alſo is of the Seed of* Abraham. If he wronged any, he accounted himſelf a Thief in ſo doing, in that he made that Reſtitution which was required of them, which our Saviour doth not contradict, but commend, in that he entitles him (who was a *Publican*) a Son of *Abraham*.

Thus have I ſhewed by a few of thoſe many Texts and Inſtances which we have in the Holy Scriptures, that God doth ſtrictly require *Reſtitution*. There are many more which I ſhall have occaſion to make uſe of under other heads. I am next to conſider:

2. The great diſpleaſure of God againſt unjuſt and fraudulent Perſons, who detein the right of other Men from them. *The Righteous Lord loveth Righteouſneſs, and his countenance doth behold the upright.* But thoſe that are unjuſt and deceitful, are *an Abomination* to him. He

that detaineth the right of another Man from him, hath ſuch an *accurſed thing* in his hand as *Achan* had, which he muſt quickly get ridd of, or it will be his utter ruine and deſtruction. If God ſhould not avenge the injuries which Men are guilty of, he were not juſt, and conſequently he were not God. And if the ſinner knew the vengeance which hangs over his head, from him to whom *Vengeance belongs*, he would make haſt and never reſt a moment till he had reſtored. The evils which come upon unjuſt Perſons are of all ſorts, both Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal.

1. Temporal Evils. Men that have gotten Riches, but not by Right, are oft-times accurſed of God in all that they put their hands to. They and their Families, and their Poſterity become exceeding miſerable, becauſe part at leaſt of what they have, was wrongfully taken from others.

He that oppreſſeth or deceiveth his Neighbour, promiſeth to himſelf great worldly happineſs. He cares not for God or Conſcience, ſo he may by any means become rich, and thinks that he ſhall ſhortly have *The World at will*, and that all Men ſhall either fear or honour him,

him, becauſe of his greatneſs: But he is miſerably diſappointed. *Zophar* in the Book of *Job*, chap. 20. 17. excellently deſcribes the condition of ſuch a Man under the Curſe of God, whilſt he is in this World. *He ſhall not ſee the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter. That which he laboured for ſhall he reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it down*; Of which there is a ſufficient reaſon given, *ver.* 19. *Becauſe he hath taken away an Houſe which he never built.* He took great pains to get into the poſſeſſion of another Man, and thought with himſelf, that all things ſhould be pleaſant and ſmooth; that he ſhould then have *Honey and Butter* which ſignifies all delightful things: That he ſhould have *Floods* of them which ſignifies an overflowing plenty: That his flouriſhing condition ſhould never ceaſe, but be as *Rivers* that are alwayes running. But alas, the Man is mightily miſtaken. He ſhall be ſo plagued that he ſhall be glad to reſtore that which he unjuſtly took away, how hard ſoever he laboured for it. And if this Miſery did only befall the Man himſelf, it were not ſo terrible, but his poſterity are in a fearful caſe by it, as *Zophar* tells us, *v.* 10. *His Children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe*

the

the Poor, and his hands ſhall reſtore their Goods. He is become ſo helpleſs, and ſo friendleſs; ſo hated of all Men, that his Children are deſpiſed of them that are deſpiſed of others. They ſhall be glad if they can get ſuch relief as the Poor are able to afford them, which to be ſure, is but very ſmall. Nay, they ſhall be glad to begg of them whom their Father made Poor by his diſhoneſty. *And his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.* He ſhall find ſo great a curſe of God upon him, that he ſhall bring that back to them, which he baſely took away from them. He ſhall deſire them to take their own in hopes that he ſhall be leſs miſerable.

This is a very proper conſequent of baſe Actions, becauſe they enrage all Men againſt thoſe that are guilty of them. Good Men are not only ſet againſt them, but as it is ſaid, *v.* 22. *Every Hand of the Wicked ſhall be upon them.* And, which is a token of Mens being highly incenſed, they ſhall have no regard for the Children of ſuch Men, but will be apt to conclude, that they are like young Wolves or Foxes, that will be like the old one, and therefore they have no Pity for them. Some read the Words, *His Children ſeeking, ſhall pleaſe the Poor.*

The

The meaning is, It ſhall pleaſe the poor to ſee his Children ſeek to them; to ſee what a wretched condition they are brought into, for their Fathers ſake. Thus it appears how the Honey and Butter is turned into Gaul and Wormwood; or according to the foregoing verſe, how he hath the *Poiſon of Aſpes*, and the *Vipers Tongue*, inſtead of his Honey and Butter.

This *Zophar* tells us is the Condition of the unjuſt Man whileſt he lives. At the 21 verſe, we ſee in what a Condition he dies; *There ſhall none of his Meat be left, therefore ſhall no Man look for his Goods.* The Curſe of God confounded the Goods, before Death confounded the Man. They that ſhall look into his Houſe when he is gone, may find his Children, that *ſought to pleaſe the Poor*, but they ſhall find neither Meat nor Money, nor ſo much as a Bed to lie on: *No Man ſhall look for his Goods*, for there are none to be found.

Such Temporal Judgments from God as theſe are, we often ſee, befalling unjuſt Men. *Jayles* are commonly fulleſt of thoſe men that had tricks to cheat and deceive others, where they continue in a miſerable condition, becauſe all men

men know that it is beſt for the World they ſhould be there. And their Children, who might have lived plentifully, if their Father would have lived honeſtly, are glad to pleaſe the Poor, or any other from whom they may get a piece of Bread.

And this is the beſt account that can be given of the great downfall of Eſtates and Families. There was moſt probably ſome injuſtice which brought a *Moth* along with the Eſtate, and it cannot thrive. It is therefore of great moment for Perſons in ſuch caſes (who themſelves are honeſt and innocent) to enquire whether their Forefathers, or thoſe from whom the Eſtate deſcended, did not do wrong, that Reſtitution may be made, and the Bleſſing of God procured; for though that which was done may lie hid as *Achans* accurſed thing did, yet it may not impoſſible to be found out. If it were, it might be expected that the Curſe ſhould ceaſe.

This temporal Curſe of God (you will ſay) is very greivous, but it is nothing in compariſon of that which followes. Nay, when a Man hath done wrong and doth not reſtore, he may welcome all temporal Curſes to be rid of the other. Therefore. 2. Spi-

2. Spiritual evils befall Men that have done wrong. The former related only to the things of this Life, which will quickly be at an end, but theſe relate to Eternity in the World to come.

1. A wounded Spirit, and that's intollerable, *Prov.* 18. 14. When ſome Men have done wrong, they are tormented night and day, and can have no reſt or eaſe, till they have made Reſtitution. They are like Men that have taken poyſon, or ſomewhat that is exceedingly nautious to the ſtomach, and cannot be digeſted. Thus *Zophar* in the foremention-ed Chapter, *Job* 20. 15. deſcribes the condition of this Man in reference to the torment of his mind. *He hath ſwallowed down Riches, and he ſhall vomit them up again. God ſhall caſt them out of his belly. Obj.* At *v.*18. It is ſaid, he ſhall not ſwallow them down: *Anſ.* The ſenſe of it is eaſily cleared by interpreting, that to ſignifie, that he ſhall not digeſt them. He ſhall not ſwallow them down with any ſuch pleaſure or delight as he promiſed to himſelf. He thought he could have digeſted them, and grown fat with them, but God will have it otherwiſe. *God ſhall caſt them out of his Belly.* And to the ſame purpoſe it is ſaid,

v. 20.

v. 20. *He ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly*, that is, within him. There ſhall be a great diſturbance in his Mind and Conſcience. We may conſider likewiſe that which is ſaid at *v.* 23. as a farther account of the inward torment, and diſquietment of this man. *When he is about to fill his Belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his Wrath upon him, and ſhall raine it upon him while he is eating.* It may be underſtood of Judgments feared as well as felt. When he is about to eat, his guilty conſcience tells him that he is eating other Mens Bread: that he ſits down to his abundance, when thoſe whom he hath defrauded have but little to eat becauſe of him. His conſcience may be as *a dreadful ſound in his ear.* He may, before he ſits down, think that many hungry bellies are curſing of him and his abundance. Theſe terrors of mind are very grievous to him, and make him apprehenſive, that God is *pouring out the fury of his Wrath upon him.* But I will not enlarge farther upon this, becauſe many expoſitors are enclined to another ſenſe.

This evil of a tormented mind is more frequent in our dayes than all men think of, and is very often acknowledged upon

upon Death-Beds. When Men come to die, they confeſs that fraudulent actions done by them many years before, were a continued diſquietment to them, far exceeding all the profit or advantage that they had by them; however they were aſhamed to make Reſtitution.

2. Another Spiritual evil is hardneſs of heart; an obſtinate perſiſting in wicked courſes without any ſerious conſideration what the end will be. It is to be feared, that this hardneſs doth often come to judicial hardneſs. Men are given up to it by the juſt Judgment of God, ſo that they ſhall never repent. They have taken away the Right of other Men, and do wickedly perſiſt in it without Reſtitution, and God takes away his Holy Spirit, that it may ſtrive with them no longer. A mortified *Gangrene* hath taken their Souls, ſo that they are paſt ſence or feeling. All the Arguments and Importunities that can be uſed ſhall ſignifie nothing to them. The Office of their Conſcience is ſhut up, and there is no getting in. The Language of God concerning them is: They have been *unjuſt, and let them be unjuſt ſtill. Rev.* 22. 11. They *go on in their Wicked-*

Wickedneſs, and make no ſtop till they come to the place of torments.

So far as any Man can diſcern, or may ſuſpect any to be given over to this diſmal Judgment, it appears to be the condition of unjuſt Men, more than of any ſort of Sinners. What an aſtoniſhing thing is it to conſider the Caſe of Theives? Who could imagine that ever thoſe Men had the common Principles of mankind, in whom juſtice and uprightneſs is ſo abandoned, that you may as well ſpeak to Wolves and Tygars as to them? Conſider a Theif *out* of the Priſon, and you ſhall ſeldom or never hear him mention the Name of God but in Oaths. It may be he never comes to the Houſe of God, but it is to *ſteal* there. Let any one ſpeak to him of the Precepts of Religion, and he ſhall deride and ſcoff at him. Take him in the Priſon, he ſhall ſteal there, from whence he expects to come to his Tryal and Execution. If we go to him after he is Condemned, it is in vain to ſpeak to him of another World, if there be any hopes of a Reprieve; and if there be none, but he is put into the dead Warrant, 'tis moſt likely (for 'tis ſeldom otherwiſe) that you ſhall find him a poor dejected

ſottiſh

ſottiſh Creature, in whom there appears nothing of any true Repentance.

We may obſerve others likewiſe, who live by fraud and over-reaching, who are ſo hardned in their contempt of God and of Religion, that it appears more fecible to convert an ingenuous *Turk* to Chriſtianity, than to perſwade ſuch men to live honeſt and upright lives. Conſideration is their enemy, and they will ſhun and avoid it. That only (they think) befriends them, which tends to their farther ſecurity and hardneſs. Their buſineſs is to live by their Wits, and not by their Honeſty; and therefore they will not hear of Religion, but caſt it behind them, and go on with uncontroulable and ſhameleſs impudency, turning the *deaf Ear* to all that is good, as the Prophet *Zephaniah* ſaith, chap. 3. v. 5. *The Unjuſt knoweth no ſhame*; and I am ſure he that knoweth no Shame, knoweth no Repentance, but is a ſinner that *goeth on in his Wickedneſs.*

This is the moſt dreadful condition that a Man can be in, whileſt he is in this World, *viz.* To ſin againſt God, and not be afraid of him: To do thoſe things that are abominable, and yet to be ſo far from repenting, as to go on,

and do as many more as he can: To put no ſtop to his Wickedneſs till he comes to utter darkneſs, where he cannot be ſo hardned, as not to feel the puniſhment, though he was ſo hardned as not to regard the ſin.

3. Eternal puniſhment is the reward of him that does wrong, and does not reſtore. The certainty of this will appear under another Head; That which I would ſhew under this, is the greatneſs of that Puniſhment, but that's as impoſſible as to bear it: However we may ſay that, which is very terrible concerning it: that which may make a man tremble to ſpeak, and therefore one would think that guilty men ſhould much more tremble to hear or read it. Great muſt the fury of God be againſt him who perſiſted in his unrighteouſneſs, notwithſtanding both the natural and revealed Law, which God gave to him. What will God do to that Man, who was ſo far from having *regard to all his Commandments*, that he violated the firſt diſcovery of His Will to him? That every Man ought to have his own, is the firſt thing that we know when we are Children.

But

But there is a higher aggravation of guilt which I would take notice of. Men do wrong and do not reſtore becauſe they hope that being Chriſtians, they ſhall be ſaved through the merits of Chriſt. What can we imagine will become of that Man who made his being a Chriſtian the cauſe of his being a Deceiver? If he had been a Turk or a Heathen, his Neighbour might have had his Right; but becauſe he was a Chriſtian, he thought he might keep it from him without any danger. How will the Wrath of him who ſhall come to *Judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, and who *ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire taking Vengeance* ſmoak againſt that man whoſe conſcience muſt give evidence, that he had not wronged his Neighbour if it had not been for that Judge? He had not kept away his Right from him, if he had not hoped that Chriſt would excuſe him, or (which was all one to him) that he would pardon him. He heard ſo much of a great Saviour, that he was thereby encouraged to be his Neighbours deſtroyer.

We read in the Goſpel, that the great tranſactions at the day of Judgment,

will be about one mans dealings with another: Their Loving or Hating; Their doing Good or Hurt to each other. I would therefore a little argue from that of St. *Matthew*, chap. 25. If they ſhall *Go into Everlaſting Puniſhment, who did not feed the Hungry and cloath the Naked,* What ſhall become of them who made them Hungry? Where ſhall they *appear* who took away their Meat and their Cloaths from them, and never reſtored them again? And whereas thy ſhould have ſhewed kindneſs to them for Chriſts ſake, it was (in a ſenſe) for his ſake that they wronged them. I proceed to ſhew,

3. When men have done wrong, and do not reſtore, there is nothing they do which will be accepted of God. They remain under that guilt which makes all their good Deeds to be *an abomination to the Lord.*

We read in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, chap. 1. 16. That Sacrifices, and Oblations, and Prayers, and all that was done (tho by Gods appointment) ſignified nothing till men *Put away the evil of their doings.* Haſt thou injur'd thy Brother, and not reſtored? What canſt thou do which thou haſt any hopes God will accept of?

Wilt

Wilt thou Pray to God? Prayer is ſaid to be the *Lifting up of pure Hands* to him. Wilt thou lift up thoſe Hands to God, with which thou haſt taken, and doſt ſtill detein the Right of thy Brother? Are thoſe Pure Hands? Canſt thou deſire Pardon of the Righteous God, when thou doſt wilfully continue the Guilt of thy own Unrighteouſneſs? Doſt thou Pray in *Thy Cloſet*, as our Saviour commanded? Are not thy Brothers Goods lying by thee in the ſame place? Or are they not in the next Room? Whether they be or not, I am ſure they muſt needs be in thy conſcience, whilſt thou art Praying, which might be enough to ſtop thy Mouth: And no doubt it will ſtop Gods Ear. Doſt thou ever come to Publick Prayers? Methinks thy guilty Conſcience ſhould *Whip thee out of the Temple*, and tell thee, that it is a *Houſe of Prayer, and not a Den of Theeves*, that cheat and defraud their Brother.

Doſt thou hear Gods Word Read and Preached? Surely thou canſt not but ſay of every Preacher, as *Ahab* ſaid of *Micaiah*, *He Propheſieth no good concerning me, but evil.* Gods Word is to be received into *an honeſt Heart*; But I am ſure thou art far from it, who haſt de-

frauded thy Brother, and doſt not reſtore.

Wouldſt thou be a Communicant at the Lords Supper? Thou art going to the *Altar*, and forgetteſt that *Thy Brother hath ought againſt thee*, That thou keepeſt his *Right* from him. The Sacrament was appointed for the Diſciples of our Lord; ſuch as Loved one another, ſo as to be willing to part with their own Eſtates to relieve their Brothers neceſſities, and not for them that would take away their Eſtates from them by fraud or Violence. *David* ſaid, *I will waſh my Hands in Innocency, ſo will I compaſs thine Altar O Lord*, Pſal. 26. 6. Moſt certainly thou haſt not waſhed thine hands in Innocency, who art void of common Honeſty, and therefore art very unfit to compaſs Gods Altar. It is poſſible that ſuch Perſons may conceal their Crime, and come to the Lords Table very cunningly, *Eating and Drinking their own Damnation*; but I muſt ſay concerning them, that if they were roaring upon their Death Beds for the diſquietment of their ſouls, becauſe they had injur'd their Neighbour, and ſhould beg forgiveneſs of God, with the greateſt Cries, and Sighs, and Groans imaginable, and

and ſhould make the moſt ſolemn vowes never to be guilty of the like again, and after all this ſhould deſire to receive the Sacrament; we ought not to give it to them till they reſtored, or in caſe of inability, deſired to beg forgiveneſs of thoſe whom they have injured. All the noiſe that they can make, doth not ſhew that they are Penitents, till *They* have brought forth the *Fruit* of Reſtitution, *which* is meet for Repentance. By this, men may Judge how unfit they are to come to the Sacrament, in whom there is not ſo much as any appearance of Repentance. *Give* thy Brother his own, or make ſatisfaction to him for the wrong that thou haſt done, or elſe Chriſts ſatisfaction to God for Sinners by his *Body and Blood* availes thee nothing.

Wilt thou give Almes to the Poor? It may be very acceptable to *Them*, but it is not very acceptable to God. Charity ſignifies nothing from him who wants common honeſty. It may be when Men have done wrong, they think to pacifie their conſciences by giving ſome part of what they have taken, to the Poor; but I muſt tell them, that if they ſhould give it all, and what ever elſe

they have, yet it could avail them nothing. The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. 13. 3. *Though I give all my Goods to feed the Poor, and have not Charity, it profiteth me not:* Where note, a Man may give *All* his Goods to feed the Poor, and yet there may be no Charity in it. The Apoſtle means, that a Man may do it from vain oſtentation, or ſome other end, and not from a principle of Chriſtian Love. But the Caſe I have in hand is farr differing. This Man cannot ſay *I give my Goods*, for he gives other Mens: And I am ſure the Apoſtle might much rather have ſaid, If I give all my Goods to feed the Poor, and have not honeſty, it profiteth me nothing.

God looks upon what unjuſt Men give as ſtolen, and therefore regards it not. It was a good ſaying of one of the Antients: *God will ſay to theſe Men in the day of Judgment, you tell me what you have given, but You tell me not what you have taken away. You recount whom you have fed, but you remember not whom you have undon. They rejoyce whom you have cloathed, but they Lament whom you have ſpoyled.*

They are very Ignorant of the Principles of Juſtice, who think that one may be cheated, if another be relieved. It would

would be a ſtrange Plea in a Court of Judicature, if a Man ſuing for his Right, ſhould be forced to receive this as full ſatisfaction; that what his Adverſary took from him, he gave to the Poor; and therefore it is reaſonable that he ſhould be a loſer. It may as well be pleaded before Men, as before God, at the great Tribunal. This ſort of giving to the Poor, is ſo far from being acceptable to God; that it is a good reaſon, why the Poor ſhould refuſe their acceptance. It was a remarkable paſſage, which our *Engliſh* Chronicles tell us of, that when one of our Kings would have given a load of *Freeze* to Cloath the Fryars, they return'd it back again, becauſe he had been an oppreſſor of his Subjects, ſaying, *Men ought not to give Alms of that which they have rent from others.* No Man can imagine, that to give to one Man ſhould be a reaſon why another ſhould coutinue cheated of that which was wrongfully taken from him.

When Men have done wrong, there is no Act of Religious Worſhip towards God; no Act of Charity or Kindneſs towards Men, that is accepted.

But

But before I paſs this head, I muſt tell you, that in ſome caſes an intentional Reſtitution is ſufficient. As for inſtance, If the offending perſon is unable, and is fully reſolved that he will reſtore to the utmoſt, ſo ſoon as he is able: Or if he be at a diſtance, or be any wayes hindred from making actual Reſtitution at preſent, but is fully purpoſed to do it, his acceptance with God bears date from that Reſolution, becauſe God accepts of a willing mind, *Quod quiſquam vere voluit etiamſi adimplere non valuit.* That which a Man really intends is accepted of God, as if it were fulfilled. I cannot underſtand how *Zacheus* his Reſtitution could be any other than intentional, becauſe our Saviour ſaid, *This day is Salvation come to his Houſe.* We cannot imagine that he reſtored that day, and if he had reſtored formerly, Salvation had come to his Houſe before, ſince that was made the evidence of his being a true Penitent. He that being convinced of the wrong that he hath done, beggs forgiveneſs of God, and engages to God, that he will reſtore, is from that time in a State of Acceptance.

4. When

4. When Men have done wrong no Repentance can avail without Reſtitution. Preſumptuous Sinners are apt to think that it is but Crying upon their Death-Beds (as I have already mentioned) to God for mercy, and they ſhall ſurely obtain it. If this Repentance would ſecure the happineſs of another World, I cannot tell how any but thoſe that are taken with diſtraction or ſuddain Death, ſhould miſs of it. Every Man knows that it is a baſe and unworthy thing to injure another; inſomuch that it is one of the hardeſt things in the World for a Man to keep his mind quiet, that hath been guilty of it, when he thinks himſelf at the fartheſt diſtance from Death and Judgment: But when he apprehends *Death* approaching very near to him, and Judgment behind it, he cannot but be exceedingly tormented to think how far he hath been from that Holineſs which qualifies Men for happineſs: That he hath not had the common Principles of Uprightneſs towards Men prevailing in him. It can hardly be ſuppoſed then, but that his Soul muſt be in bitterneſs, and that he muſt begg Mercy and Pity from God. But this Repentance, how deep, and how afflicting ſoever it is, cannot

not entitle a Man to the benefit of Grace and Mercy; And that upon a double account.

1. It contradicts the deſign of Gods accepting our repentance, and receiving us into favour. *In the beginning it was not ſo.* When God made us capable of fulfilling his Will, we were obliged to do it, and not otherwiſe to continue in his favour. There was no Repentance mentioned; but ſince Man is fallen from God, and become utterly unable to to perform the Will of God, as he might have done in the ſtate of Innocency, God hath been pleaſed (from his infinite pity and good will to Man) to enter into a Covenant of Grace with him, that Repenting of what he hath done amiſs, and uſing his ſincere endeavour to do his duty according to his mean Capacity, he ſhould obtain his favour, and everlaſting happineſs. Now in this caſe that I am ſpeaking of, there is not the leaſt reaſon or occaſion for the Benefit of this Covenant, ſo far as the offence relates to Men. 'Tis true indeed, that he who hath injured his Neighbour muſt ask forgivneſs of God for the Violation of his Law, and muſt repent and amend, and in ſo doing he hath the priviledge of the Covenant; but

for

for the wrong that he hath done to his Neighbour, there is no need of it, becauſe he may reſtore or recompenſe. There is no neceſſity of ſupplying a defect, and therefore the Covenant of Grace is unneceſſary. If when Man fell from God, he had been able to make a recompence and ſatifaction, there had been no need of our Saviours ſatisfaction for us, nor of his being the *Mediator* of this *Covenant*: There is not therefore the leaſt reaſon to think that an unjuſt Action in one Man to another (for which Reſtitution may be made) ſhould be forgiven upon the account of that Covenant which was only made to ſupply defects. If Sinners had any promiſe in this caſe, that their Repentance ſhould be accepted without reſtoring; the Covenant of Gods Grace would prove very injurious to the moſt upright ſort of Men. It might therefore well be ſaid by St. *Auguſtin*, *Non remittitur peccatum niſi reſtituatur oblatum*: *The Sin is not forgiven, unleſs that which is taken away be reſtored.* *Judas* his Repentance was far better than ſuch Mens, in that he *brought again the thirty pieces of of Silver.*

2. It

2. It is againſt the nature of Repentance, and directly contrary to the Scripture-notion of it. There is a Repentance amongſt Men, which is only Mans being troubled for what he hath done, and wiſhing he had not done it: And in this ſenſe I may be troubled that I have wronged my Neighbour, though I am reſolved I will not reſtore: but this comes ſhort of that Repentance which God accepts of. There are two things required in true Repentance.

1. A very deep, ingenuous and affectionate grief of mind for what a Man hath done. It is a moſt afflicting ſorrow which is aggravated according to the Circumſtances of the Caſe. If a Man hath injur'd a poor Man that could not help himſelf, it is oppreſſion, and muſt needs be the occaſion of great grief. If he hath injur'd a good Man his grief is the greater, becauſe of his near relation to God, and the greater obligation he therefore had to love him. And, who ever it was, it is a great aggravation of his ſorrow, if he be not able to make Reſtitution, becauſe he knows the man and his Family are like to be the worſe for him, when he is gone out of the World, and may have cauſe to wiſh that he

he had never come into it. The ſorrow and compunction of mind that is in a true penitent, doth moſt certainly exceed all the pleaſure that ever he took in his ill-gotten Goods or Eſtate if ever he had any Pleaſure. And yet Repentance doth not ſo much conſiſt in the diſquietment of the mind, as in a Mans looking back upon what he hath done, and his undoing it again ſo far as he is able, and his Reſolution to do ſo no more.

Repentance is not true and right unleſs the mind be renewed, and the Man brought into ſuch a ſtate of uprightneſs and integrity, as he is capable of: And I am ſure he is far from it, who keeps the right of his Neighbour from him. What ever grief of mind may appear to the Eye, *Pœnitentia non agitur ſed fingitur. It is not real but feigned Repentance.*

He that is a true Penitent, cries, *What muſt I do?* And I think every one may tell him, *That he muſt reſtore, if he hath wronged his Neighbour.* That's true Repentance which tends to the waſhing and purifying of the Soul from ſin: But the pollution ever remains where no Reſtitution is made. It was an ancient and a true ſaying amongſt the *Hebrews*, *He that doth*

not

not reſtore, can no more be renewed by Repentance, than a Man can be purified by waſhing, who keeps the unclean thing in his hand.

There is nothing plainer than what the Prophet, *Ezekiel* ſaith, chap. 33. v. 14, 15. *When I ſay unto the Wicked, he ſhall ſurely dye: If he turn from his ſin, and doth that which is Lawful and Right, If the wicked reſtore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed; walk in the Statutes of Life, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die.* Who could Imagine, that an unjuſt and fraudulent perſon had ever read this Scripture, and yet could think of Repentance without Reſtitution? Repentance is here deſcribed: It is a *turning from Sin*, It is a *doing that which is Right*, and queſtionleſs there is nothing more Right than that every Man ſhould have his own, or a recompence for it. It is *Reſtoring the Pledge.* There were ſome ſo wicked, that when they had received that for which a pledg was their ſecurity, they would not reſtore it: And we have too many ſuch in our dayes. It is to *give again that which he hath Robbed.* All Fraud and Injuſtice is called Theft, and Robbery: And it is no leſs, although there be another ſort of it, to which the word

is

is uſually applied. Theſe Expreſſions relate to what is paſt in a Wicked Mans Life, and then 'tis added, *Walk in the Statutes of Life*, to let him know what he muſt do for the time to come. By this it plainly appears, that Repentance doth as well reſpect an amends for what is paſt, as care to live well for the future. And he that fails of reſtoring, muſt *ſurely die* becauſe he hath not done that which is abſolutely neceſſary in order to his eſcape. *Repentance without Reſtitution, is Repentance without Amendment*; and that availes nothing.

In the New Teſtament when *Zacheus* ſaid, *If I have wronged any, I reſtore*, &c. If he had only ſaid, If I have wronged any, though I reſtore not, yet I am grieved and troubled for it, and wiſh I had never done it: And our Saviour had accepted of that Repentance, it had been enough to have made his Religion rejected in the World. Though the *Phariſees* ſaid unjuſtly of him, that he was a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, they might juſtly have ſaid, that he had been a Friend to Thieves and Robbers. And as the *Gadarens* deſired him to depart out of their Coaſts, becauſe they loſt their Hoggs, ſo all Men might have deſired him to de-

part out of their Country, that they might not loſe their Eſtates by Theives and Decievers becoming his Diſciples. I have enlarged upon this further than I ſhould have done, if the fooliſh and unreaſonable preſumption of Sinners did not make it neceſſary: And the Truth is, there is nothing more idle and ridiculous than a conceit that a man is a true Penitent, when he ſtill remains a deceiver. There may be a very ſerious uſe made of the blunt ſaying of old Father *Latimer*; *Reſtore, or the Devil will laugh at you:* the *Devil* makes them Fools indeed, who think that a Man may be a true Penitent for what he hath wrongfully taken away, and yet keep it. I proceed to the third enquiry: Namely,

III. Who are obliged to make Reſtitution? To which I may anſwer in general, all that have knowingly done to any Man any kind of Prejudice, which hath leſſen'd his Eſtate or Circumſtances in the World. We are commanded to love all Men, and *as we have opportunity*, to *do good unto all Men:* and if on the contrary we have taken opportunities to do hurt to any, we ought to make Reſtitution in the firſt place, and then to do him what

what good we can; for otherwiſe we are not returned into a good ſtate and Chriſtian temper of mind.

But I do not think it enough to ſpeak generally, nor will I undertake to bring the caſe of all unjuſt men into particulars. There are innumerable wayes by which bad Men may ruine themſelves, although but one way for them to get rid of their guilt and Puniſhment. I ſhall only ſpeak of ſome particular caſes which are too common in this age, and we may juſtly fear, that thoſe that are guilty, do not conſider the abſolute neceſſity of Reſtitution.

1. I ſhall conſider the caſe of the Thief or Robber, thoſe whom *We* commonly call ſo; for, as I have already mentioned, God calls all unjuſt and fraudulent Men by thoſe names, and will Judg them as ſuch: He that either ſecretly takes away that which is another Mans, or doth it by force and violence, is bound to reſtore: And if he doth not, he cannot expect Mercy from God.

It is very requiſite that all Men ſhould know this, who have either been guilty of theft, or are under any temptation to it; becauſe though many Thieves intend to repent, yet I queſtion whether there are

any that intend to reſtore: If they did, it would make them afraid to enter upon that wicked courſe of life, which makes them unfit for the Society of Men, and therefore are condemn'd to die.

There are two other reaſons why I inſiſt upon the neceſſity of Thieves Reſtoring.

1. They make a Covenant, and enter into the ſtrongeſt obligations to conceal the Wickedneſs of one another, by which honeſt Men are kept from thoſe diſcoveries of their *Goods*, which might tend to their regaining of them.

It is a very ſad thing to conſider how thoſe that forſake God, and abandon both the principles of Piety and common honeſty, do preſently give themſelves up to the power and diſpoſal of the Devil, by which their condition becomes unſpeakably deſperate. They will adventure the loſs of their lives, and throw away the Life of their ſouls, rather than they will not keep the *Devils* counſel. I have heard, that they make a ſolemn vow to be true to one another, in concealing what they have taken from honeſt Men: as if an Oath to God could oblige them to be faithful in the ſervice of the *Devil*: as if in conſcience, they ought to be true

true to one another in promoting the trade of Theiving to the utmoſt of their power, and to do what in them lies to hinder men from having that which is their own. They do not think that their Baptiſmal vow, or any other, can oblige them to *Keep* Gods Commandment ſo as this vow obliges them to *Break* his Commandments, the eighth eſpecially, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.* And (which is very ſtrange, and a very good uſe may be made of it) I have been very credibly informed, that they engage to maintain one another, when any ſhall be committed to Priſon, and whatſoever is given to one Priſoner, his Companion in League with him hath part of it. What an aſtoniſhing thing is it, that the *Devil* can make Wickedneſs to be the occaſion of ſuch firm and laſting friendſhip! And how mightily doth it reflect upon the want of love to one another in thoſe that ſerve a better Maſter!

2. I mention this caſe, becauſe I have not obſerved that care taken, which I think is abſolutely neceſſary to bring condemned Theives to true Repentance. They are admoniſht to pray to God to have Mercy upon them: To diſcover their Companions for the prevention of future miſchief to the World: But they

are not (I fear) ſo urged to the neceſſity of Reſtoring, as they ought to be.

That Miniſter who endeavours to bring Theives to Repentance, ſhould obſerve this Method: 1. To examine whether they are not entred into ſuch a Helliſh league, as I have mentioned; and to let them know, that they ought in the firſt place to break it, and moſt earneſtly to begg forgiveneſs of God, that ever they made it. 2. To require them to diſcover whom they have Robbed, and to uſe their utmoſt endeavours towards Reſtitution; and to let them underſtand, that it is as much as their Souls are worth, to conceal the *Right* of any Man from him. If they do, they are in an impenitent ſtate, and muſt be for ever Miſerable. 3. If all that they took be imbezzeld and gone, that they ſend to the Perſons whom they have wronged to begg their pardon and to deſire them to be ſuch good Chriſtians as to pray to God for them. 4. That they ſolemnly promiſe, if a pardon prevents their Execution, that they will Labour and uſe all diligence to make Reſtitution to every Man. If they comply in theſe things, it is a good argument of their true Repentance, and that God will hear their Prayers, and regard their teares.

They

They ſhould underſtand that they muſt *firſt be reconciled to their Brother*, before they can have acceptance from God: That they muſt by Reſtitution, ſo far as they are able, and penitent acknowledgments, unburden their Conſciences of that heavy load of guilt, which they can not expect ſhould otherwiſe be ever removed from them.

There is another ſort of Theft too common in our Age which I am loath to paſs by, and yet I bluſh to mention that there ſhould be ſuch a ſin ſo much as named amongſt Chriſtians. The ſtealing of Children; A ſin ſo great, that every man had need to be concerned for the diſcovery of thoſe that are guilty, leſt the Judgment of God ſhould brake out againſt that City or Country in which ſuch a horrid Villany is acted. It was the Law of *Moſes*, Deut. 24. 7. *If a Man be found ſtealing any of his Brethren of the Children of* Iſrael, *and maketh Merchandize of him, or ſelleth him: then that Thief ſhall die, and thou ſhalt put away evil from among you.* The ſtealing of a *Child*, is a more notorious crime than the ſtealing or conveying away a *Man* to ſervitude, for many reaſons which I need not mention. If the Child hath Parents, though

they be never ſo poor, yet their love to their Children is as great as theirs that are rich and honourable. Nay, in ſome reſpect their love is greater, becauſe their Children are all that they have in the World to delight in. For a Thief to ſteal a Child from his Parent, is the greateſt theft in the World: Other Thieves break into the Houſes of men and Women, but theſe break into their Hearts. Other Thieves ſteal their goods, but theſe Thieves ſteal their Lives, which are commonly (as *Jacob* ſaid) *bound up* in the welfare of their Children. He that is robbed of his Goods, may be recompenced by the Charity of others; but he that is robbed of his Child, can have no recompenſe. All the gifts in the World can not pacify that Parent. It may be the loſs of the Child hath diſtracted the Parent, and in that caſe it may be ſaid, that the Thief in ſtealing the Child hath robbed the Parent of his or her ſences. If thoſe Parents, the tender Mother eſpecially, could have foreſeen ſuch a calamity, they would have bid the Theif welcome that ſhould only ſteal their Goods, and have left the Child. When a Child is ſtolen, the troubled ſoul of the Parent is wandring (as it were) all over the

the World after him, and cannot be at eaſe concerning him. Sometimes (like *Jacob* concerning *Joſeph*) he thinks that *An evil beaſt hath devoured him, he is without doubt rent in pieces*: Or elſe, which is worſe, he thinks his Child is pined by hunger into his Grave: Or, which is worſt of all, that he lives in Slavery and in cruel Bondage, where neither Soul nor Body is taken care of. It may be the Father of the Child is dead, and it is the only comfort of the ſorrowful Widdow, that ſhe hath her Husbands Image in her Young Child, but as it is ſaid in *Job*, chap. 24. 9. The Thief hath ſtolen *the Fatherleſs from the Breaſt*, and who can expreſs the diſtracting ſorrow of the Mother.

If the Child hath no Parents, the Crime admits of greivous aggravations. We are to ſhew more kindneſs to an Orphan than to another Child, becauſe he hath more need of it; God himſelf requires it: *Thou ſhalt not afflict a Fatherleſs Child*, Prov. 22. 22. *If he cry unto me, I will ſurely hear his cry*. v. 23. This, to be ſure, is the greateſt and like to be the moſt laſting Affliction. When God ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not afflict the Fatherleſs*, The contrary is intended, thou ſhalt comfort and

and nouriſh him. St. *James* ſaith, *'Tis pure Religion to viſit the Fatherleſs*; but what dreadful Wickedneſs is it to make Merchandiſe of them. It is very ſtrange, that Men can be guilty of ſuch unatural cruelty; that neither Chriſtianity, nor Humanity, nor yet common Sympathizing Pity, (which wicked men are ſeldom wholly bereaved of) ſhould make men abominate this ſort of theft: we may very well conclude, that when they are ſo Wicked, they are Atheiſtical, and *Say in their Hearts, there is no God*; for ſurely they could not be ſo cruel, if they thought they muſt give an account to that God, *In whom the Fatherleſs findeth Mercy*. But when they have done this Wickedneſs, they will find that there is a God, by the terrors of him in their Conſciences in this World, or by everlaſting puniſhment from him in the World to come.

I was once exceedingly concerned for one who had been guilty of this horrid ſin, and became (I hope) a very ſincere Penitent. There was ſo great diſquietment in his mind (as well there might) that he could not but diſcloſe it, although ſhame and danger occaſioned the concealment of his Name. He wrote to me his

his earneſt requeſt, that in my next Monthly preparatory-Sermon for the Sacrament, I ſhould reſolve two Queſtions. 1. Whether one that hath ſtolen a Child and conveyed him beyond the Seas, could by any means, become a Worthy Communicant. 2. If he might, what was neceſſary in order to it. I was very willing to gratifie his deſires. not doubting but what I ſhould ſay, might be uſeful to others as well as to him. I reſolved the firſt affirmatively, and ſhewed that what ever ſin any one hath committed, if he hath the grace to repent of it, he may be a Worthy Communicant. The ſinners danger is not ſo great, becauſe of the heinouſneſs of his ſin, as becauſe of the malignity of his mind; that hardneſs, and impenitency, which is the concomitant of it. And in anſwer to his ſecond queſtion, *viz.* What is neceſſary to be done, *&c.* I aſſerted the neceſſity of Reſtitution to the utmoſt that could be done by him. That he ought to ſpare no coſt or pains for the regaining of the Child, and bringing him back to his Relations: That in the mean while the Money received, ſhould be ſent to the Parents, if they could be found, and that they ſhould underſtand

derſtand, that the Perſon who did them this wrong, did humbly begg forgiveneſs, and would be ready to make what ſatisfaction he could; and ſhould be adviſed to, according to both their circumſtances: If neither Child nor Parent could be found, that then the Mony ſhould be given to ſome Pious or Charitable uſes. I was ſoon after informed, that ſome years had paſt ſince the fact was done. That the Boy who was ſold, came up with ſome Weſt-Country Carriers, but no account could be had concerning him: And therefore the offender readily parted with the Money for the Poor. And I hope (though I know him not) he is one that lives as becomes a true Penitent.

Whileſt I was affording my aſſiſtance for the eaſing of this Mans Conſcience by making enquiries; I met with a very remarkable, and it ſeem'd to me a very credible Relation, concerning one that had been guilty in this matter: The publication of which I think may be very uſefull.

A Younger Brother being Covetous of an Eſtate, Sold his Eldeſt Brother and conveyed him beyond the Seas. Afterwards, the remorſe of his Conſcience was

ſo

ſo great that he could not reſt, till he had uſed all poſſible means for the regaining of him. Merchants engaged their Factors to enquire for him, from whom there came an account, that he had run away from his Maſter to whom he was ſold, and had herded amongſt a Wild ſavage ſort of Bruitiſh Men, who lived in Woods and Forreſts, by what a Gun or a Bow could provide for them. However, he was taken from amongſt them, and ſent back to the poſſeſſion of his Inheritance, but he never became capable of enjoying it. He was, for the moſt part, raging mad, and in his intervals, nothing could ſatisfie him, but to return again to that forraging life which he had lived before, and which had made ſuch an alteration as to his faculties, that he was almoſt become wholly Bruitiſh. Who can imagine the fatal conſequence of ſuch a horrid theft, as the ſtealing of others, and ſending them in to forraign parts of the World?

2. Next to the caſe of Thieves and Robbers: I ſhall conſider the caſe of thoſe that are unfaithful to any truſt committed to them, by whom Reſtitution muſt be made, or Gods ſevere Judgment muſt be expected.

1. Un-

1. Unfaithful Executors, to whom the care of the Fatherleſs is committed, and they take advantage from it to enrich themſelves and their Families. How many plauſible tricks and devices, ſuch Men may have, I cannot tell; nor how many wayes they have to act contrary to the Golden rule of our Bleſſed Saviour, *As you would that Men ſhould do unto you*, &c. Which executors are eſpecially to conſider; but ſure I am, that their offence is very great, and can never be forgiven without Reſtitution. For

1. Their unfaithfulneſs is inhumane and barbarous, that which every conſiderate man doth exceedingly abhor. He is the man whom the deceaſed Father eſteemed above all the men in the world, and all the friends he had in it, as one fit to be entruſted with his choyceſt Jewels, his deareſt Children. Nay, it may be that he died with great ſatisfaction in his mind that he left the care of them to him; And now it is his happineſs that he cannot be grieved in his grave, and it is the unhappineſs of the abuſed Orphans, that they are fallen into his hands who cares not for them, but only for their Eſtates, and how to deprive them of it. The baſe injuſtice of

of ſuch a perſon, is ſo hainous, that all men would be ready to be his tormentors, if the Law of the Land did not hinder: and when he goes into another World (unleſs he firſt makes *Reſtitution*) he will be *delivered to the tormentors*, there.

2. As an unfaithfull executor is abhorr'd of *Men*, ſo is he much more of God, who hath declared his ſpecial regard to the fatherleſs, inſomuch that he is pleaſed to be their Father; *He heareth their cry* againſt any that ſhall be injurious to them; but how much more, when their cry is againſt him who hath undertaken to defend them againſt the oppreſſion of others, and is himſelf become their oppreſſor and devourer. It may be, that through the wickedneſs of the executor, the children, who if their father had lived, might have been brought up *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, are now cheated of their Portions, and expos'd to great temptations for a ſubſiſtance, ſo that the executor is become the ruin both of Body and Soul. I may add, that though the Caſe of the Orphans be exceedingly to be pitied, yet nothing ſo much as the Caſe of ſuch an executor, and of his own chil-

dren, how plentifully ſoever they may be provided for at preſent. It is to be feared, that thoſe who can be guilty of ſuch wickedneſs, are given up to the hardneſs of their hearts, otherwiſe the thoughts of their ſin would make them expect the curſe of God every moment. Their guilt would raiſe the Ghoſt of their dead friend to walk in their conſciences and torment them till they ſhould make *Reſtitution*.

2. Unfaithful Officers, and other Inhabitants of Pariſhes, who are intruſted with the concerns of the Poor; There are two caſes to be conſidered.

1. The truſt that is committed of the common ſtock of the Poor. Church-Wardens, and other Overſeers are the Perſons to whom the Poor are to reſort for their common ſupplies. If theſe Officers ſhall in their Pariſh-Meetings ſpend any part of the Poors Money, it is Injuſtice and Oppreſſion which requires Reſtitution. It is a great unhappineſs that ſome men who have in all other reſpects kept *a Conſcience void of offence*, have by ill cuſtoms and examples brought themſelves into a ſnare, which they can never get out of but by Reſtitution. In Pariſhes where there is a due care taken

of

of the Poor, ſo that every one that is in want hath a competent ſupply; If the Pariſhoners conſent to that which is expended in eating and drinking at publique or private meetings, I have nothing to ſay againſt it: Nor yet where there is Money that is particularly appropriated for the defraying of ſuch expences. But where there is neither of theſe caſes, and where the numbers of the Poor are ſo great, that all that can be procured for them, is too little to ſupport them; If any Officer ſpends any part of that which is deſign'd for them, or properly belongs to them, he is guilty of injuſtice, and oppreſſing the Poor, and can never die in peace unleſs he makes Reſtitution. It is a fearful thing for the Poor to cry unto God, that they might have had more Bread, if the Officers had not call'd for ſo much Drink: That they were forced to be content to drink Water, whilſt their Money paid for Wine: That they are ſtarving whilſt others are feaſting with that which was appointed to keep them from periſhing.

I know there is a pretence, that what is expended (though placed to the Poors account) is none of their Money, but I

could never be ſatisfied of the Truth of it, much leſs underſtand why it ſhould be placed to that accompt. I know of no Money that comes into the Hands of Officers, but it is either gathered by a Rate made for the Poor according to a Statute for that purpoſe, and which allows of no ſuch Expences as I am now condemning: Or by Gifts for the Poor: Or by the Cuſtomary Fees of the place where they live, which, beſides the concern of the neceſſitous, may have ſome relation to the *Church*, but none at all to the *Tavern*. Whoſoever is guilty in this matter, whatever advice or example he may plead, I am ſure he is bound to make Reſtitution, and he hath cauſe to admire the Goodneſs of God in accepting of his Repentance, conſidering how many (through his neglect and unfaithfulneſs) may have died for want, to whom no recompenſe can be made. Such Men have *Robbed the Poor, becauſe they were Poor*, and may expect that God ſhould *ſpoil the Soul of thoſe that ſpoiled them*, Pro. 22. 22, 23.

2. There is another ſort of Unfaithfulneſs which ſome have been guilty of, which is of a more hainous Nature, and that is the imbezzling, or any wayes miſpending

miſpending Donations which are left by worthy deceaſed Chriſtians for the Relief of the Poor, to the end of the World. The caſe is this: There are ſeveral ſumms of Money beſtowed upon a Pariſh, either to lay out in a Purchaſe, or to be put out to Intereſt, that the profits ariſing may ſupply the Poor yearly with Coals, Cloaths, or other neceſſaries. The principal-Money coming into the hand of an Officer, it is laid out either in the repair of the Church, or ſome other neceſſary Pariſh-concern which then happens, for which there muſt otherwiſe have been a rate upon the Inhabitants. The Money thus taken and expended, is allowed in the Officers accompts by the ruling-Men of the Pariſh; but with this reſolution, that the Gift ſhall alwayes be made good out of the Pariſh-Money; and if it cannot be ſpared out of that, there ſhall be a rate made upon the Inhabitants for the time being.

This is a very fair and ſpecious pretence, and may take with thoſe that are very ignorant or very careleſs concerning matters of ſuch great importance: But I ſhall eaſily make it appear, that it is one of the greateſt Cheats that Men

are or can be guilty of in the World.

As for that which is ſaid, that the gift is made good out of the Pariſh-Rents, or mourtuary-Money (*i. e.* Burial-Fees) I anſwer, that thoſe belonged to the Poor before ever the gift was given, and were chiefly intended for their maintenance. Some have ſaid, that it is chiefly intended for the Repair of the Church, but I hope they will grant, that the over-plus is for the Poor. If then the gifts muſt be made good out of that Money or the Rents, I muſt in plain terms ſay, that the Poor are cheated of the principal, and then forced to pay themſelves the Intereſt. I muſt likewiſe ſay, that by this means the Poor have no benefit by any ſuch gift, but it is rather a prejudice to them, for they are forced to take Cloathes, for which there is a full value given out of their Money, and then to pawn them for leſs than half their worth to buy Bread. Donations are intended for the good of the Poor, and that they may have ſuch a comfortable relief as is not to be expected from the Pariſhes in which they live. But if the Principal-Money be ſpent and gone, and the good intended by it, be only ſupplied out of that

which

which the Poor ſhould otherwiſe have had, I would fain know where the Benefit is?

If it be ſaid that the Donations are made good by a Rate upon the Inhabitants for the time being; this is a down-right cheat to them. The Pariſhioners who lived when the gift was given put the Money into their own Pockets, or, which is all one, it ſpar'd them the paying of ſo much as muſt have been raiſed upon them, for the defraying of that charge which the gift ſupplyed: And then the Inhabitants that are to come muſt make it good to the end of the World; ſo that if there ſhould be many gifts, the Pariſh would be quite undone by the charge which thoſe gifts brought npon the Inhabitants.

I cannot ſpeak or think of ſuch actions without very great abhorrence, and I pray God that thoſe who have been any wayes guilty concerning them, may bethink themſelves of their condition, and of the curſe of the Righteous God which hangs over their heads, if it be not already fallen upon them. I cannot think but he that robbs upon the High-way hath leſs to anſwer for to Almighty God: He doth not pretend to be honeſt,

but theſe would take it as an affront to be charged with diſhoneſty, and yet are guilty of the greateſt: He only, or chiefly, robbs thoſe that are Rich; theſe rob the Poor: He forwarns Men that they may ſecure their Money; theſe do tacitly forwarn all Men of leaving their Charity to the World when they go out of it: For who is there that would bequeath a gift to a proper uſe, if he foreſees that it will only become a preſent benefit to Rich Men, by eaſing them of their Taxes, and for the time to come it ſhall be either a charge to the Poor, or to the other Inhabitants of the Pariſh?

As theſe Men are guilty of a moſt hainous offence both to God and Men, and may well be ſaid to be the greateſt hinderers and diſcouragers of the good that might be done by others; ſo I have had occaſion to obſerve fearful Judgments purſuing ſome Men and their Families, who have been guilty concerning it, and I pray God that others may avoid the like. I was, not many years ſince, a ſorrowful Mourner for an *Alderman* of this City, who, I believe, gave many hundred pounds every Year to the Poor; and the great reaſon of his extraordi-

traordinary charity whilſt he lived, was from the diſſatisfaction he had concerning the diſpoſal of the Charity of thoſe that are dead. I am very confident that what he obſerved of Mens unfaithfulneſs in this matter, hindred the Poor of many hundreds, if not thouſands of Pounds, that might have been given for their ſupport. If Men that embezzle or alienate, or are but careleſs as to an exact fulfilling the will of the Dead, did but conſider what a damp it gives to the charitable deſigns of good Men, they would look upon themſelves as Men come into the World neither to do good themſelves, nor ſuffer good to be done by others. There might be many inſtances more of Great and good Men, being diſcouraged by the abuſing of *Donations:* And I am able to give a very ſtrange account of the miſerable condition of many, both whileſt they lived, and when they died, who were unfaithful; Who on a ſuddain, from being accounted fit to be entruſted with great concerns, could ſcarce be truſted for a Penny, but became Priſoners; and when they died, their collations which they had made and paid for out of the Poors Money might juſtly

prove greateſt torment to their departing ſouls, of which I knew a dreadful inſtance.

Let not any be ſo cenſorious, as to think that I make this a general charge. I know very well, that in many places there is care taken by honeſt and faithful Officers, and I wiſh it were in their power to retrieve the injuſtice that have been done by others.

I cannot under this Head, but take notice of a more Notorious Fraud than I have yet mentioned, and ſuch a one as I am aſhamed to ſpeak of: that ever thoſe who are called Chriſtians ſhould be guilty of it. I mean the deceit that hath been uſed to the French Proteſtants, who being perſecuted in their own Country, are fled for relief into ours. An Inhabitant of a very conſiderable City in this Kingdom, hearing me begg relief for them, and repreſenting them as moſt highly worthy of our Chriſtian Charity; could not be ſatisfied till he came to me, and informed me, that in the City where he lived, and the adjacent Country, there were other apprehenſions concerning them; and the people were ſo prejudiced by ill reports, that the Money that was gathered for them, was kept back

back by the Officers, and deſigned for other purpoſes: Which occaſioned my complaint, and thereby one Pariſh, if not more, were enforced to return the Money to the Commiſſioners. It is to be feared that others have been guilty of the like oppreſſion, and I am ſure they can never repent, and be in a happy condition, till they have reſtored and begg'd forgiveneſs of God, although they have already given the Money to others that are the greateſt Objects of Pity. If they ſhall *go into everlaſting Puniſhment*, who do not relieve poor Chriſtians, *Mat.* 25. What ſhall become of thoſe which hinder them of that relief, which better Chriſtians than they, have given for them? I can never hear or think of thoſe calumnies which are ſpread abroad againſt thoſe Chriſtians, but my heart aketh to think what *Deſtruction from God* thoſe that are guilty of them, may juſtly expect to themſelves, and we may all fear leſt God ſhould ſend ſome heavy Judgment upon the Land. It muſt needs make a loud cry in the ears of God, that poor Chriſtians being *perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*, ſhould not only be forced to flee from the cruelties of Men of another Religion into a Country where they cannot avoid

avoid the *Scourge of Tongues*, and their Bread which they dearly earn is grudged and repined at, by many of their own Religion; but are likewiſe cheated.

Since I have made mention of them, and have been greatly concerned for them, ever ſince their arrival; I will make a little digreſſion on purpoſe to vindicate them from thoſe unchriſtian Aſperſions, by which they have been extreamly prejudiced.

It was at firſt reported, that there was no perſecution in *France*, which might force them to leave their native Country, but that they are a company of Idle Vagrants that came to live upon our charity, rather than to ſtay at home to live by their own induſtry. And the great cauſe of this Objection is, that they are of the poorer ſort who are come over; whereas if there had been a perſecution for Religion, the Rich would have been forced to flee as well as the Poor. Some that have traded into that Country, having heard of the Perſecution, reſolved to remove their *Effects*; but an anſwer was returned, that there was no need of it: and from theſe things ſome have concluded that we are abuſed in our charity given to thoſe people.

people. It is likewiſe a great Offence to ſome, that they work at under-rates, to the diſadvantage of our own Poor, whoſe complaints are very great. Theſe Objections will be anſwered to all that are pleaſed to conſider theſe following particulars.

1. If any ſay they are Idle Vagrants, I will ask the Accuſers, What Religion they are of? If they be Church-of-*England* Men: Methinks they ſhould not ſo much forget their Duty and Loyalty, as to accuſe the King and his Privy-Councellors, the Biſhops and all eminent Miniſters of the Church, of encouraging and countenancing Idle Vagrants, and promoting the charity of all good Subjects for their relief. If they be Diſſenters, Methinks they ſhould have better thoughts of thoſe Miniſters, who in their private Meetings gathered large Summs: And of the Rich Men who were their followers, who gave very liberally to them; than to think that they would have incouraged idle Vagrants. Thoſe that have accuſed them, or entertained ill-thoughts concerning them, muſt either be very ignorant of their caſe, or ſuppoſe themſelves to be impos'd

pos'd upon by thoſe for whom they profeſs the greateſt eſteem.

2. Whereas ſome ſay that there are none but the poorer ſort that are come over: I anſwer, 1. That it is falſe, as to matter of fact. There are ſome that were very Rich, and others who are Perſons of great quality. But 2. It muſt be acknowledged that moſt of them are of the poorer ſort: And it could not otherwiſe be expected, conſidering the nature and method of the perſecution. Men and Women were not ſent to priſon, or put to Death for their Religion, but only impoveriſhed in their Eſtates, and dealt with according to their outward condition in the World. Thoſe that were Rich, were haraced by ſevere taxes and quartering of Souldiers to make them turn from their Religion. And we know very well, that ſo long as any thing remains, Men are not willing to leave their Country, but endeavour to make Friends, that they may obtain mitigations, having continued hopes, that the ſtorm will be at an end, and that they ſhall enjoy that which remains to them. This is a ſufficient reaſon why there were not ſuch numbers of Rich as of

Poor

poor that fled away, though now, (as we are credibly informed) the wealthieſt of them wiſh they had made their eſcape with the firſt that came over. But as to the poorer ſort, they were immediately brought to utter ruine, and therefore forced at firſt to eſcape: For 1. Thoſe that were Rich were diſabled from employing them, or affording that relief which they had formerly given. 2. Many of the Churches were, at firſt demoliſhed, where the Congregations contributed to their neceſſities. 3. Where contributions were made, the King commanded that the Money ſhould be carried to the Hoſpitals; and if the Proteſtants wanted relief, they ſhould go thither, which was a deſign, as we may eaſily imagine, to turn them from their Religion. 4. Tradeſmen were denied the freedom of ſetting-up their Trades. Who is it that conſiders theſe things, but muſt acknowledg, that the poor were forced at firſt to flee, when the Rich might ſtay longer. Beſides this, there was cruel uſage, and Barbarous affronts offer'd to the poorer ſort, which made their lives a very grievous burden to them

3. The

3. The Perſecution at firſt was not alike ſevere in every Province, but was very much according to the diſpoſition of the Governors. The greateſt ſeverities were in *Poictou* and *Dauphoin*, which were remote parts, from whence moſt of thoſe came, who have been relieved by us. At *Rochel*, and thoſe places that are nearer to us, there was then more mildneſs, though now, alas, the caſe is otherwiſe. Beſides, it was not to be imagin'd, that the *French King* would hinder the trade of his own Country, by diſcouraging Merchants from trading with him: there was therefore no need that any foreign Proteſtant, ſhould remove his goods upon the account of that Perſecution, which was only ſevere againſt the natives.

4. It is concluded by many underſtanding Engliſh men, that they are no diſadvantage to our trade, but the contrary. However, the objection that is made againſt them, relating to it, is an argument of a very ill Spirit reigning amongſt *Us*. Sometimes the *Dutch* are ſaid to ruin us: ſometimes the complaint is only of French goods coming over; and of late, malice and envy hath been complaining againſt theſe poor perſe-

perſecuted Chriſtians. I know it is very hard, if not impoſſible to ſtop clamorous mouths; but I hope that all who have either Religion or Reaſon to guide them, will conſider what they themſelves would do in the like caſe. Let them ſuppoſe, that they are driven into a far Country to earn their Bread of Strangers, and that they could not be imployed to the ſame Advantages with the Natives; would they think it reaſonable that they ſhould be forced to ſtarve, rather than to Work at an under-rate? If any of our poor ſuffer by this, they are to be pitied, and not the other to be blamed. This unhappineſs is what the Providence of God hath ordered, and there is no fault to be laid upon thoſe who cannot avoid the unhappy conſequence of their care for a mean ſubſiſtance.

I hope, that what I have ſaid, will ſatisfie ſome that have been miſtaken, and be the occaſion of their better opinion, and kinder reſpects towards thoſe perſecuted Chriſtians. But if this will not, I am ſure (unleſs ſuch Men are ſtrangly hardned) there is another Argument that cannot but make their Bowels to yern towards them: I mean the late extremity of their perſecution.

The

The edict of *Nantes* which was made in favour of them, is now repealed; their Churches demoliſhed, and their Miniſters baniſhed: the People ſo barbarouſly uſed, that ſome who were worth thouſands *per Annum*, are become beggars for their bread. Others ſo abuſed, that they have declared their deſires to dy, and cannot obtain it. It is in vain for them in their extremities, to cry to their Own Prince, as the woman did in the famine, *Help O King*; and therefore there are many of them eſcaped hither, and have made that *Cry* to Our King, who hath *heard their cry*, & hath gratiouſly promiſed, not only to protect them, but to relieve and ſuccour them. Surely, thoſe that were formerly prejudced, muſt now be ſatisfied, that their being perſecuted was real and not feigned: thoſe that refus'd to afford their relief will now exceed others; as a good manifeſtation of their ſorrow, for their uncharitable opinion concerning them; and be as ready to prompt others to ſuch a good work, as they were before to diſſwade any from it: which was a very great evil in them.

Since I have made this digreſſion for their ſakes, I will adventure to add two or three things in their general commendation.

1. Their

1. Their great Piety. I have been very credibly inform'd, that it was uſual for many of them, when they were in their own Country, and injoyed their liberty, to go fifteen or ſixteen Miles every week to their Churches, and carry their Infants to publique Baptiſm (which was highly commendable in them, and deſerves to be reflected upon us) and that the poorer ſort were wont to riſe very early on *Saturdayes*, that they might diſpatch the buſineſs of their callings time enough to be upon their Journey in the afternoon: That the Churches were full of them ſome hours before Divine Worſhip began, and that they uſed to carry with them a peice of Bread, or ſome mean fare by which they refreſhed themſelves, upon the Lords day, in Woods or Fields ne'er to the Churches. Since they came into *England*, we may obſerve their exceeding Zeal for Religion by the haſt which they make to Worſhip God. And, as I know it to be the cuſtome of ſome, ſo I ſuppoſe it is of many more, they make ready their *Sundayes* Proviſion on the *Saturday* evening, that they may ſerve God all *His* day, and then they go home to refreſh themſelves.

They are careful likewiſe to ſerve God on the Week-days both at home and at Church. I have had frequent occaſions of giving them unexpected viſits, and have found a Poor Man, (in his wooden Shoes) reading the Scriptures, and others ſtanding devoutly round about him. They are likewiſe very careful to bring up their Children *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.* Little Children, of their own accord, when they riſe from their Beds, go to their private prayers, and likewiſe when they go to bed again.

2. Their Charity is likewiſe highly to be commended. I have known *Some* that have refuſed relief for fear their poor Brethren, whoſe wants were ſomewhat greater, ſhould not be ſupplied. I have known others who could not be perſwaded to ſtay in *England*, for fear that the great number of them ſhould be too burdenſome to us, and leſt their Brethren ſhould want who were not able, or to whom it was more inconvenient, to go into *Ireland* and other places. But that charity which I would have all Engliſh Men to admire, is, the liberality of the Churches towards their poor Fellow-members. It is to aſtoniſhment to think the

care

care and Pains, and charge that they are at: Inſomuch that it may be admired that thoſe that are Rich amongſt them (whoſe number is comparatively ſmall) can ſupport ſo many Families. There is nothing more diſingenuous than to refuſe our help to them, or that we ſhould ſay as ſome unworthy Men amongſt us have done. *Let their own Churches provide for them.*

3. I cannot but recommend their Frugality, which I have had great cauſe to take notice of. It is commonly ſaid that our Engliſh cannot fare ſo hardly as they do, but I muſt take leave to ſay, that the Engliſh ſpend more and yet do not fare ſo well. I have been entruſted with the diſpoſal of a conſiderable part of the publick charity beſtowed upon them; and have often made a juſt computation that they have not each of them ſpent above *Sixteen*, or at moſt, *Eighteen Pence* in a Week, and yet have had meat thrice in the Week, as much as very well ſufficed them. Their Broth, with only Bread and a few Herbs, and as much meat after it as we ſometimes eat of Cheeſe, is a very great Meal, and a very good one. They drink but little, and I may ſay that in ſome years converſe,

I never ſaw any one of them in the leaſt diſguiſed with ſtrong drink, or that they did at all covet it.

If I were to write a Treatiſe on purpoſe (which I once intended) I would vindicate them from the reproach of wilfully offending their King, or acting contrary to his Laws. But I hope I have ſaid enough to convince all Men, that thoſe who have hindred them of that which was given for their Relief have thereby greatly offended God, and cannot expect forgiveneſs unleſs they make Reſtitution to them, although they have already given the Money to thoſe amongſt us that are the moſt neceſſitous. And I do not well underſtand how they that have miſrepreſented them to others, and thereby prevented the kindneſs which might have been ſhewed to them, can have any peace in their minds till they have made a compenſation.

Having now in ſome meaſure detected the ill dealings of thoſe who are entruſted with the diſpoſal of the charity of others, and eſpecially of that which was left to the World by deceaſed Benefactors; I hope I ſhall not be thought too

too preſumptuous in offering my adviſe to thoſe that are charitably diſpoſed, for the prevention of ſuch abuſes as I have complained of.

That Chriſtians ſhould be diſcouraged from leaving Legacies to the Poor, is very ſad; and it is very unhappy that they ſhould be at a loſs how to diſpoſe of their charity to the beſt advantage, which I confeſs is ſomewhat difficult. If Money be given to the Poor of the Pariſh, it is by conſequence, given to the Rich, who are otherwiſe obliged to provide for them: If it be given to put out poor Children to be Apprentices, 'tis the ſame, or very little differing: If it be given for a liberal maintenance of the aged, the poorer ſort for whom it was intended, cannot, it may be, make Friends, and by that means it is given to thoſe that are leſs indigent: If it be given to bring up Scholars to the Univerſity, it is become a prejudice to the Church, and a diſcouragement to Men of better abilities, to bring up their Children in Learning: And 'tis a prejudice to the Revenewes of the Univerſities, by filling them with poor Scholars. I have often ſeen the inconveniencies that have attended the diſpoſal of Gifts

and Legacies, and could therefore wiſh, that the charity of good Chriſtians might be diſpoſed after ſuch a manner as this which followeth. That it might be put into the hands of Miniſters of ſuch Pariſhes, for the time being, as the donor ſhall make choice of, or to the Lords of Mannors: or Magiſtrates of ſuch Cities, to be diſpoſed by them, *hic & nunc*, as they in their diſcretion ſhall think fit; giving an account of their diſpoſals to the Biſhop of the Dioceſs, or the Juſtices of the Peace at the Seſſions, and then ſolemnly taking an Oath, that they have not been guided by favour or affection, or preingagement; but have given the Money to thoſe whom they really thought to be the fitteſt objects of Charity. Or the Biſhop of the Dioceſs, or Juſtices at the Seſſions may appoint Truſtees, adminiſtring ſuch an Oath to them, in order to the diſcharge of their truſt: and have liberty to make new Truſtees as they ſee occaſion, or ſuſpect partiality. If there be ſome ſtrict Limitation concerning the Pariſhes in which the Truſtees inhabit, it may the better tend to the anſwering the end of the Benefactor.

By

By this means many an honeſt Trades-Man, who by great loſſes is ſinking in his eſtate, might be ſupported. Many a Laborious Farmer, who is impoveriſhed by the loſs of Cattle or otherwiſe, might be kept out of a Priſon, being enabl'd to weather the preſent ſtorm. Many a Studious Scholar in the Univerſity, whoſe Parents are unexpectedly become indigent, or dead, may be continued there, and not be forced to loſe all his hopes, and, it may be, his wits together. Many a Sick Mans life might be ſaved, who cannot bear the charge of Phyſick and Phyſitians. Many a wounded Perſon, or ſuch as have ſores, or Chronical diſtempers might be recover'd. Many a ſorrowful Widow might have a ſpeedy ſupply, which might make her *Heart to ſing for Joy*, by which ſhe might be ſet into a way of ſubſiſting, or her Children diſpoſed of, who will rather endure any hardſhip than become a Pariſh-charge, and in a ſhort time ſhee dies, it may be, for fear of it.

The great miſcarriage of Charity hath proceeded from Perſons being entruſted with it, that are either ſo high, that they will not, or cannot afford their

perſonall inſpection; or ſo mean, as eaſily to be byaſſed by obligations and private intereſts; but eſpecially from too particular and narrow confinement; for by this means, though there are great ſumms left for the good of the Poor, yet none for thoſe that happen to have moſt need, and are moſt deſerving of them.

One man who is a great Object of Charity, cannot be relieved, becauſe he doth not live in the next Town: Another, becauſe he wants a year of being old enough: a Third, becauſe he was not born *I know not where*: a Poor Scholar, be he never ſo deſerving, muſt have nothing, unleſs he had come from ſuch a School: A poor woman, that is in extremity, and hath a great Family, muſt not have ſo much as a Loaf of Bread, ſo long as the drunken beaſt, her husband hinders her from being called a Widow: Children that are miſerable through the Vice or Misfortunes of their Parents, how apt ſoever they are to learn, may not have a little coſt beſtowed to teach them to Write and Read, by which they might become fit for tolerably good Employments, becauſe they cannot be called Orphans: whereas, it too often happens, that there are no ſuch Widows

dows as thoſe that have husbands to ruine them, and no ſuch fatherleſs children as thoſe that have fathers who deſtroy both Souls and Bodies: all which might be prevented by unlimited Charity

Beſides the giving of money, the lending of a ſum out of a Stock of Charity, might be of good conſequence, where the borrower is of known Sobriety and Honeſty, and is by ſome ſudden accident come to want. If he be never able to repay, 'tis great Charity to let it go; If he become able, the ſame Summ may prove the ſupport of many Families. This I have known to be of very good conſequence.

I cannot blame any for having a particular regard to the place where they have lived, and had good Education; But, if whilſt they are alive, they would have a greater regard to the Perſonal deſert of men, than to the circumſtance of the place, from whence they came; why ſhould they not order the ſame method, to be obſerved when they are dead? It may ſhew kindneſs enough to recommend ſuch places, in caſe there be Inhabitants that are equally deſerving; but a ſtrict limitation is exceedingly inconve-

venient. If Charity be limited to particular places and perſons, I muſt again ſay, that ſuch perſons whom the Teſtator would gladly have relieved in his life time, rather than others, muſt have no benefit by it after his death. When a man hath Mony in his hand that is unlimited, it is almoſt unimaginable, the account that he is able to give of what good is done by it, upon emergent occaſions; and 'tis pity but a frequent accompt ſhould be given, not only to prove the undoubted faithfulneſs of the Truſtee; but likwiſe to encourage other charitable Chriſtians to the like diſpoſal. I am confident, if good men would make tryal of it whilſt they live, they would be abundantly ſatisfied in this method at their death. And their examples would be a happy precedent to Poſterity.

3. They are bound to make Reſtitution, who either by borrowing Money, or taking goods into their poſſeſſion, do engroſs to themſelves other Mens Eſtates, and then force them to a compoſition, with a reſerve of advantage to themſelves.

There are many deceits, and oppreſſions of that nature, which our Senators in former Ages never thought of; for I am confident

confident if they had, there would have been ſome ſevere Laws for the prevention of ſuch deſtructive Wickedneſs. They would certainly have made Laws, which ſhould have given to ſuch men the Puniſhment of Felons, in regard they are ten times more injurious to thoſe with whom they are concerned, or at leaſt have inflicted a ſevere reſtraint upon their Perſons, and made their Heirs liable to ſatisfaction. If a man can engroſs many thouſands of pounds to himſelf, and then betake himſelf to a Priſon, which, excepting the name, becomes a place of mirth and jollity and delight, and then leave a great many honeſt Mens Eſtates to his Family (and it may be his Creditors are forced to lie on the hard boards whilſt they hear him merrily ſpending their Eſtates amongſt the Jovial Cheats of the Nation) I am ſure the Puniſhment bears no proportion to the crime.

A true repreſentation of the caſe is ſufficient to ſhew what a dreadful ſhame it is that ſuch ſhould be called Chriſtians, whoſe ſociety the worſt ſort of Heathens, that have but common principles, would abandon.

Theſe

Theſe perſons have no ſooner gotten a conſiderable part of other Mens Eſtates into their hands, but preſently their abominable pride appears. They muſt have their Coaches, and both their City and Country-Houſes richly furniſhed, that they may delude the World, and entice all men to truſt them upon the ſuppoſition, that they are very rich, and make great improvements of what they borrow. Thus, it may be, they continue for ſome Years, and then if their Creditors call for their Money, they may have their choyce, whether they will be content with an inconſiderable part, or none at all. The debtor hath Money enough, and can live better in a Priſon, than many of his Creditors can live out of it. Theſe Men would ſtill be called Chriſtians, and what they do is (they ſay) according to Gods Word in the New Teſtament. Their compoſitions are, that they may provide for their Families, and if they ſhould not, they ſhould be *worſe than Infidels:* And now that they have poſſeſſed other Mens Eſtates, *They* muſt take ſome other care for *Their* Families which they never expected; for their Money is kept to maintain his Family to whom it was lent. Good Lord! That

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ever the Holy Religion of the Righteous God and our Bleſſed Saviour ſhould be thus abuſed, and that ſuch men ſhould pretend to the Chriſtian-Name. If the Apoſtle ſaid, *He that provideth not for his Family* (*viz.* through ſloth) *is worſe than an Infidel*, What would he have ſaid of thoſe that cheat other mens Families to provide for their own, for that's a far worſe Crime. They are ſo far from any thing of Piety, that they are bereaved of all Humanity, and care not what the poor and the innocent ſuffer by them. If they cannot bring all their Creditors to a Compoſition, though they have thouſands, and ten thouſands of Pounds in their hands, the Poor Widow that would willingly comply with their Propoſals becauſe of her extremity, ſhall not obtain one Farthing from them; as if their being in a Priſon diſcharged their Conſciences from what is due to the moſt neceſſitous. Theſe Men provide for their Families as the moſt ſavage Beaſts provide for their Whelps; by the Blood and Spoil of other poor harmleſs and innocent Creatures. I am ſure they provide a fearful curſe for them.

If I could hope that theſe Men have any ſenſe of God left in their minds, I would

would tell them theſe two things, to which I am well aſſured all caſuiſts of all perſwaſions will ſubſcribe.

1. That man who hath engroſſed the Money or goods of another man, is bound (as ever he expects mercy from God) not only to diſcover his whole Eſtate, but likewiſe readily to part with it, and heartily to beg forgiveneſs of his Creditors, that he hath not wherewith to ſatisfie every Man to the full. That Eſtate which is called his is other Mens, and he doth but keep a Title to it to cheat them of that which is their due. They *Conſult Fleſh and Blood*, and the intereſt of this World, that do it not; but they *deny the Faith*, and are worſe than Infidels; for every Infidel knowes that all men muſt have their own, and whatſoever any Man ſuffers, he muſt not detein the Right of another. Nay, I may ſay, that an underſtanding Heathen would never ſerve that God, from whom he that cheats another ſhould have any hopes to be forgiven. It is a very ſtrange thing, that the *Devil* ſhould ſo delude any Man, as to perſwade him to expect any thing from God but a curſe and everlaſting deſtruction.

2. Thoſe

2. Thoſe that have thus brought their Creditors to a compoſition are never the leſs liable to Reſtitution. Any kind of force upon the Creditor, cannot diſcharge the Conſcience of the Debtor. If a Man be neceſſitated to take part of his debt, that he may not loſe it all, the debtor ſtill remains guilty of the Cheat, and muſt reſtore.

There have been Inſtances of Men *Breaking* and Compounding, and afterwards becoming able to pay Creditors: And by the loudneſs of *Their* cry, and the cry of their Conſciences they have reſtored; and it was well for them that they did ſo, for they had otherwiſe died in an impenitent condition.

That Man who hath thus compounded, cannot leave one Shilling to his Family, but he leaves a curſe with it to them; and he carries a worſe with him into another World, unleſs he hath left enough beſides, to ſatisfie his Creditors.

Where ſuch Men are fair and ingenuous in their dealings towards their Creditors, it may move them to pity, and likewiſe a very generous reſpect; but however, a Man muſt not be cheated of his due, becauſe he will not conſent to give away

away part of it. I am ſorry this Age hath abounded with ſo many inſtances of ſuch men, to the great diſparagement of Chriſtianity.

4. Thoſe debtors are obliged to make Reſtitution, who are diſcharged from impriſonment by an Act of grace. There was, not many years ſince, an Act of Parliament intended, only to diſcharge poor Priſoners who were worth nothing, or ſo little, that it was not likely there debts could ever be paid. But it was ſtrangly abus'd, to the great loſs of many an honeſt Creditor, who was made poorer, it may be, than his Debtor, by it. When theſe men were diſcharged by a Law, they took no farther care to pay their debts, as if any human Law in the World could diſcharge a mans Conſcience from a juſt due. The pooreſt of theſe that have eſcaped from the priſon, ſhall not eſcape the place of Torments, if he doth not uſe his utmoſt endeavor to ſatisfie every Creaditor to whom he was indebted.

I cannot but take notice of this, becauſe many of thoſe, who had the Benefit of that Act, have ſhewed no care to diſcharge a good Conſcience, but ſpend all that they get in fine Apparel, and a ſumptuous

ſumptuous way of living, as if they were delivered on purpoſe to vaunt, and to bid defiance to thoſe to whom they were and ſtill are indebted. I muſt tell ſuch perſons, that it was never intended by that Act, they ſhould not pay their debts; but only that they ſhould be inlarged, and have their Liberty, upon ſuppoſition that they were not able.

No power on earth can diſcharge my conſcience from paying a juſt due, nor mitigate my offence to God, if I do not uſe my utmoſt endeavour towards every mans ſatisfaction. When ever that debtor dies, he will have juſt cauſe to wiſh that he had died in priſon, and never had the beneſit of that Law; for then his incapacity of paying his debts might have excuſed him; whereas his enlargment hath cauſed his guilty Conſcience to fly in his face, and to accuſe him, that he might have ſhewed himſelf honeſt, at leaſt in ſome meaſure, and would not: Nay, 'tis too probable, that he doth not only wrong thoſe that have been ſevere to him; but thoſe likewiſe who have been moſt ingenuous, in truſting him in his extremity, & patient in forbearing him.

5. All unjuſt Deteiners of debtors goods, or thoſe that do convey them a-

way, ſo that the creditors may not have them towards their ſatisfaction of a juſt debt, are bound to reſtore. Perſons are commonly guilty of this, either upon the death or failure of a man, for the ſake of his Family: And it may be they think they do God ſervice, in that they ſhew ſo much care and pity towards a poor Wife and Children. But I muſt have leave to tell ſuch perſons, that their charity (as they call it) is inconſiſtent with common honeſty, for whatſoever goods were the mans, are his Creditor's, and he ought not to be deprived of them. 'Tis probable the goods were bought with his money, or that they are not yet paid for; and what an unreaſonable thing it is, that their being out of the poſſeſſion of him to whom they belong, ſhould be the occaſion of his loſs. Or though there be neither of theſe caſes, yet the creditor muſt be paid ſo far as the Goods extend. We know that in caſe of Adminiſtration, the moſt neceſſitous Widow, is obliged to pay the debts of her Husband, ſo far as he left wherewith to ſatisfy them: And it is highly reaſonable, becauſe no man, under what pretence ſoever, ought to keep back the rights of another. That Widow

dow that thinks it well for her, that ſhe hath taken away Goods which otherwiſe the Creditor had Seized, hath wronged that man, and her own Soul moſt of all. Gods providence muſt be truſted, and not the Laws of Juſtice, and Uprightneſs broken, for fear of Poverty. Thoſe likewiſe who have concerned themſelves in it, are acceſſary to the Cheat, and bound to take care that *Reſtitution* be made.

6. All deceitful Tradeſmen are bound to make *Reſtitution* according to their ability, and the neareſt computation that they can make. It is very ſad to think how ſome men have enſnared their Souls for the ſake of gain; and more ſad to think what hardneſs and inſenſibility is become the concomitant of Trade.

I am afraid that there are many, who think they are ſo far from being bound to reſtore, that they are to be commended for their Art and Cunning in deceiving thoſe with whom they have Commerce. The World is now come to that paſs, That men plead a neceſſity for it, and that men cannot ſubſiſt without it; and therefore they hope it will be allow'd of. But I muſt tell them, That this is to *Charge God fooliſhly*, and

very Wickedly, and they may well expect a fatal conſequence of it. This is as much as to ſay, That Gods Laws have ruin'd the world, by requiring Uprightneſs, and it is better to be rul'd by the *father of Lies*, who teach men how to deceive.

There are a great many who would be glad, if that part of Gods Word could be blotted out, which forbids *Defrauding*, and which threatens *Liars* with *Fire* and *Brimſtone*; becauſe men are bent upon Deceit and Fraud.

But how bad ſoever the world is; I muſt ſay that *Honeſty is the beſt Policy*, and that Upright dealing brings the ſureſt advantage. I am ſure I have had occaſion to obſerve that honeſt-dealing-men thrive; when thoſe that have tricks to deceive, fill the Jayles, or fly from their Habitations. I wonder that men ſhould not rather plead a neceſſity of upright-dealing, that they may have Gods Bleſſing, and Thrive in the world, conſidering what diſmal complaints have been made of the decay of trade ſince cheating hath been ſo accounted neceſſary.

There is a common ſaying amongſt Trades-men, that their gains are more

or leſs, according as they meet with Cuſtomers. I am afraid the meaning is, that they get moſt by them that are moſt ignorant of the value of their goods, or of ſuch as are moſt charitable and willing to believe that the Seller ſpeaks truth, when *by lies* he laies *wait to deceive.*

I have heard that it is too common for Trades-men to ſell one ſort of goods for another of greater value. Or to proteſt that their goods coſt ſo much when their conſciences cannot but accuſe them of the contrary.

There is another trick, which the great deceiver hath of late years taught his children; and that is to Ask an unreaſonable price, in hopes that their Cuſtomers will not think them ſo impudently unconſcionable as in truth they are, and therefore, in common modeſty (which the ſeller hath not) will proffer much more than the goods are worth. He that by ſuch dealing gets moſt gain, as he meets with cuſtomers, may alter the Phraſe, and ſay, That he gets the greater Curſe, as he meets with cuſtomers.

I do not think that any thing ever did Chriſtianity ſo much hurt in the world, as the deceit of Chriſtians in the way of Trade. I have heard that when

Turks and Heathens trade one with another; If the buyer ſuſpects any deceit in the ſeller, he will preſently reply to him, *Do you think I am a Chriſtian?* which ſuppoſeth that they account Chriſtianity to be a Religion, which allows men to be fraudulent and unjuſt, contrary to the common Principles of mankind. And what diſparagment can there be like to it?

In the formentioned place, *Levit.* 6. 2. *He that lyeth unto his neighbour in fellowſhip, i. e.* in his dealing with him, *he ſhall reſtore the Principal, and a fifth part more of that which he hath deceitfully gotten.* And in *Pſal.* 15. 2. the Pſalmiſt tells us, That *he ſhall dwell in the Hill of the Lord, who walketh uprightly, & worketh righteouſneſs, & ſpeaketh the truth in his heart.* The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, for God is the Avenger of all ſuch.* How can a deceitful Trades-man read, or think of theſe Scriptures, and be ſo deluded, as to think that he can either obtain Heaven, or eſcape Hell, unleſs he repents, and makes *Reſtitution* to the utmoſt of his power?

7. All

7. All Treſpaſſers that have either wilfully or careleſly prejudiced their Neighbours. I think fit to mention this, becauſe of the great injuries of Oppreſſion, that I have had occaſion to take notice of, eſpecially in the Countries where I have lived. Many Men are ſo far from loving their Neighbour as themſelves, and from obſerving the Golden Rule, *Of doing as they wou'd be done unto*; that they care not what damages others ſuſtain by them, ſo they may not be forced by the Law to give ſatisfaction. In *Exodus*, chap. 22. v. 5. 'tis ſaid, *If a Man ſhall cauſe a Field or Vineyard to be eaten, and ſhall put in his Beaſt, and ſhall feed in another Mans Field, of the beſt of his own Field, and of the beſt of his own Vineyard, ſhall he make Reſtitution.* Some have been ſo bad as to put their Beaſt into another Mans Field, but many more have cauſed their Neighbours Field to be eaten through their great neglect and careleſneſs: And if they can but eſcape an Arreſt at Law, or, If they have received any ſmall damage from the ſame Neighbour, they think they are not obliged to take any farther care, or be any farther concerned, as to Reſtitution.

By this means it happens, that thoſe who are the moſt Pious and Peaceable, Or thoſe that are the pobreſt and moſt unable to force a ſatisfaction, become very great ſufferers, while he that commits the treſpaſs hectors and threatens thoſe whom he hath injur'd. But let ſuch Perſons know, that God will be an *Avenger*, if not in this World, moſt certainly in the World to come. If ſuch Perſons expect Mercy from God, it concerns them, either by *reference*, or otherwiſe, to make as juſt a computation as they can, how much the damage they have done hath exceeded that which they have received, and to make Reſtitution; that the cry of the poor and of the Peaceable may not go up to Heaven againſt them. The Country as well as the City; The Farmer as well as the Tradeſman complains of bad times, and I muſt tell them, that ſuch diſhoneſty and injuſtice may be the cauſe of their grievances. Men have little reaſon to expect that God ſhould bleſs their encreaſe, if they can be ſo unjuſt and unconſcionable as to hinder the encreaſe of their Neighbour, and to make no ſatisfaction.

8. They

8. They are bound to make Reſtitution, who by ſlanderous reports, or undue repreſentments have been injurious to others. A Slanderer is commonly the moſt injurious Man in the World, and it can never be known what miſchief he does in the World, but ſo far as it appears, he is bound to make Reſtitution: For otherwiſe the leſs offender ſhould be puniſhed, and the greater ſhould be excus'd. That of *Zacheus* which I mentioned before, *Luke* 19. 8. is rendred, *If I have taken any thing from any Man by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him fourfold.* 'Tis true (as Dr. *Hammon* obſerves) it is a proverbial expreſſion, and the word συκοφαντῶν is uſed in a large ſenſe, as ſignifying any kind of wrong done to any Man. But yet we may conclude from it, that Slanderous accuſations do as well require Reſtitution, as any other ſort of Injuries.

There is nothing more expreſly forbiden in the Scriptures, *Lev.* 19. 16. *Thou ſhalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy People:* And *Jam.* 4. 11. *Speak not evil one of another*, and in many other places: And nothing is more unbecoming a Chriſtian, in whom Love and Charity ſhould be the great Ornaments, that make his Religion ſhine in the World.

World. And yet there is nothing more common amongſt Men, than Reproaches and Slanders to the great prejudice of others.

There are two ſorts of Slanderers eſpecially, that do great wrong, and cannot be forgiven without Reſtitution: Thoſe that invent the Slanders, and thoſe that ſpread them; One works at the Devils Forge, and Frames the lies; and the Other is his Servant, whom he appoints to carry his Work out, and ſpread the Slanders abroad in the World. I am ſure theſe Sinners above others may be ſaid to be *of their Father the Devil*, for they are his very Picture, and bear his Name. They are διάβολοι, Calumniators, Make-bates. There are none more obedient to him, or more ſerviceable to his deſigns in the World, as I might ſhew, if it were my preſent undertaking. Moſt certain it is, that they do great wrong, and muſt make Reſtitution. We would think it very hard if there were not actions of defamation, as well as treſpaſs: that he who hath taken the value of one Shilling ſhould be compell'd to make Satisfaction, and he that hath taken away my Reputation, which is dear to me as my life, and that which

which my Livelyhood depends upon, ſhould be excus'd. The only Queſtion is, Whether Reſtitution, ſo far as the Damage appears, be ſufficient; and whether a Slanderer becoming a true Penitent, is not oblig'd to make Publication of his offences, that his acknowledgment may overtake the Slanders that went before; and that whoſoever hath been prejudiced by him, may be no longer under that diſrepute? A ſlanderer is hated of God and Man. *David* reſolved to take away the life of him who took away the good name of his Brother, *Pſal.* 101. 5. *Whoſo privily ſlandereth his Neighbour, him will I cut off.* In which we may conſider *David* ſpeaking the mind of God as well as his own. And it is not to be expected, that a Slanderer can be reconciled to God or Man without Repentance to the one, and Reſtitution to the other. There is but one pretence that I know of, why a Slanderer ſhould not reſtore; and that is, his having done more injury to himſelf than to others. This may be true as to matter of Fact, and it is a good Providence that ſo orders it, that a Slanderer ſhould be abhorred of him, whom he thinks by his tales to pleaſe; And this may be given as one reaſon

reaſon of what *Solomon* ſaith, *Pro.* 10. 18. *He that uttereth a Slander is a Fool*, becauſe he ſeeks the prejudice of another, and it falls upon himſelf. But this will not excuſe him, ſo far as he hath been injurious. Though he be a Fool, all Men will not be ſo wiſe as not to regard what he ſaith to the prejudice of his Neighbour; but in Cities and Towns Tradeſmen often loſe their Cuſtomers, and in the Country many honeſt Men are ruin'd by Slanderous Lies carried to Creditors and Landlords. But God will be the avenger of all ſuch unleſs they reſtore.

9. Vexatious Proſecutors in Courts of Judicature, are bound to make Reſtitution. It is too common in the World for Men to make no other uſe of the Law, but to gratifie their Piques, and their implacable malice againſt their Neighbours, either by Arreſts, Indictments or Libels; Or ſome unneceſſary complaints to Magiſtrates, in which their deſign is to force Men to charge, and if it be ſo great as to prove deſtructive to them and their Families, it ſhall the better pleaſe them.

Our Saviour hath preſcribed a rule to be obſerved in all caſes of that nature, *Matth.* 18. 15. *If thy Brother ſhall treſ-*

paſs

paſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee, and him alone. If he ſhall hear thee thou haſt gained thy Brother. If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c. But there are a great many, who when they are offended, ſcorn to come to their Brother, let our Saviour ſay what he will. Their buſineſs is not to gain their Brother, but to ruine him, or at leaſt to overcome him and ſo iuſult over him. They have *one or two Witneſſes*, but they are not to be brought to him, but are to be kept for a vexatious tryal, and then to be carried to the Court, that they may appear againſt him. The deſign of our Saviour is, that there may be a continuance of Love amongſt Chriſtians, notwithſtanding ſome offences amongſt them which are unavoidable: But the deſign of theſe men is to make ſuch offences a Plea for their Rage and Malice. Our Saviour would have a ſoft and mild way, that offenders thereby may be reclaimed: But they are for a rigorous way, that offenders may be tormented and utterly ruin'd. When men are guilty of theſe vexatious conteſts or complaints, they are ſo fierce and furious in their proſecutions, that they have no time to

ſpeak

ſpeak with their conſcience before they proceed; much leſs to conſult the Holy Scriptures, and thoſe rules which Chriſtianity hath preſcribed. Methinks it is ſomewhat ſtrange, that when a man hath acted ſo directly contrary to our Saviours rule (which with great eaſe he might have obſerved, and the forſaking of it proves very troubleſome) he ſhould not expect any mercy from him: But it is much more ſtrange, that he ſhould think that our Saviour ſhould not require ſatisfaction to his injur'd Brother before his pardon. I may add, that it is very ſtrange likewiſe, that, from a general notion which men have of Repentance and obtaining Mercy, they ſhould ſuppoſe the Chriſtian Religion to diſpenſe with that which is moſt highly reaſonable, and moſt agreeable to the common ſenſe and ingenuity of mankind; That Men ſhould think of a Repentance to ſerve their turns which will give a diſcharge to them, contrary to all reaſon and conſcience; And that there is Mercy to be had from God, which is not only inconſiſtent with his Juſtice, but an Enemy to common Right and Equity. That Judge would be accounted very unjuſt, who ſhould diſmiſs an offender without

a reaſonable ſatisfaction to the Injur'd Perſon, eſpecially, when it is in his power to make it. *And ſhall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Shall he that knows the malicious deſigns of Men, in the Proſecution of their Neighbours, forgive that offender without a recompenſe? If Malice hath impoveriſht another; Repentance muſt bring Reſtitution, or it will never entitle him to Chriſts ſatisfaction, and the Kingdom of Heaven.

10. Unjuſt deteiners of Mens Goods which were ſtolen, and are taken in the poſſeſſion of Felons, are likewiſe bound to make Reſtitution. I know very well, that the goods of condemned Malefactors are forfeited to the King, but are often given to Sheriffs, or ſome other Officers, who ſometimes conceal the ſtolen goods of others, or make ſpeedy ſale of them; or elſe, if they are not of ſufficient value, to encourage the owner to contend at Law for them, he muſt loſe them. This is ſo commonly practiced in ſome places, that the Officers who ſeize the goods, have concluded, that their being in the poſſeſſion of a Felon, hath alienated the property, and (which were one of the hardeſt caſes in the World) that the former

former owner hath no right to them. But I muſt tell ſuch Perſons, that they act contrary both to the Law of God and Man, and that they are guilty of that injuſtice which they can never get off, but by Reſtitution. In ſome caſes it may be queſtioned, which is the greater Thief, he that firſt ſtole the Goods, or he that detains them? It may be that the Thief ſtole for his neceſſity, but this Man, whoever he be, keeps them to ſatisfie his Covetouſneſs, and is not only unjuſt in ſo doing, but baſely unworthy and diſingenuous; for it is probable, that the man who was robbed, loſt many more Goods, and this Man is reſolved, that he ſhall loſe all, rather than he will part with any. How far is ſuch a Man from doing as he would be done unto, Which ſhould be conſidered in ſuch a caſe? He is, in that, a good Chriſtian, who makes Publication, whereby honeſt men may have that which is their own: But he that deteins them is no good Chriſtian, nor ever can be till he makes Reſtitution.

11. They who are any wayes abetting or aſſiſting to him that does the wrong. In many caſes of injury, ſome contrive the miſchief and give directions, and others

others act in it. Some are *Wiſe* to contrive *Evil*, and others are bold and hardned enough to act it. Some find heads, and others find hands. In this caſe, the man that advis'd and directed, is as well guilty as he that acted. The Law doth moſt juſtly puniſh acceſſaries as well as actors. He that ordereth and directeth the evil to be done, may well be accounted the principal Perſon in the guilt, and therefore the moſt chargeable with it. *David* is charged with the death of *Uriah*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9. *Thou haſt killed* Uriah *with the Sword*, and yet he did not do it himſelf, but ordered it to be done. He that concerns himſelf in the wrong, can never clear himſelf of the guilt, but by Reſtitution. I heartily wiſh that this may ſeriouſly be conſidered, by thoſe that think they are very wiſe and cunning if they can contrive the miſchief which others act, and remain undiſcovered. God and their Conſciences will find them out, and make them find out whom they have injur'd, and a Satisfaction for the injury, or they will be found in the place of torments. It may as well be ſaid to that Man, *Thou haſt wronged thy Brother*, as it was ſaid to *David*, *Thou haſt killed* Uriah.

12. Lastly, The Heirs of them that have done wrong, are bound to restore, where it was done by him, from whom the Estate descended. The Heir must not plead that he is not bound to examin his Fathers actions, or to concern himself any farther than the Law obliges him. If he enjoyes that with which his Fathers debts ought to have been satisfied, he is obliged to make satisfaction. It may be he died in a Prison, on purpose that he might not pay his debts, but leave an estate to his Son: Or he refused to sell or mortgage his Land with which he might have satisfied his creditors, that it might remain to his Children without any incumbrance. But alas, he is gone to his place; and if his children be not honester than their father was, they must follow him. He hath left an Estate, and a Curse with it. The father cheated another man of his right, and his son keeps the possession of it. Or I may say (according to all expositors upon the eighth Commandment) *the Father was the Thief, and the Son is the receiver.*

This might be the reason, why *Samuel* said to all *Israel*, 1 *Sam.* 12. 2. *I am old, and gray Headed, and my Sons are with*

you

you, whose Ox have I taken, &c. That if he had done any wrong which might be remembered after his death, his sons might restore. And this he might desire, as well for his sons sake, as for uprightnes sake; that Gods curse might not be upon them, or upon the Inheritance which they had from him. If Gods anger was severe against the whole Camp of *Israel* for one *Achan* his keeping an accursed thing (which was only part of the spoils taken in War which God had forbidden *Jos.* 7.) how may whole Families expect Gods curse should be upon them, whilst they dive upon an accursed Estate, which was either bought with other mens money, or else they were cheated, that it might not be sold?

A good man will rather trust Gods Providence, though his children should be in danger to beg, than suffer them to eat the bread of other men. For children to keep that which was wrongfully gotten by their Father, or any other from whom the estate came, is not only contrary to the rules of Justice, but, as the case may be, very shamefull, and such as common ingenuity abhorrs. It may be, that the heir knows

very well that his father was in indebted to thoſe that are poor, and if he had not wronged them, they might have been in a plentifull condition. How can ſuch a man eat his Meat in quiet, when it it is bought with that money which ſhould have ſupplyed the poor man with Bread? The Heir knows that his father ran into debt to buy coſtly meat for him and the reſt of the children: How can he ſatisfie his mind, that the poor man ſhould loſe that which he himſelf (though in his minority) had a great ſhare of? The creditor is become ſo poor for want of his due, that he is glad to work for his bread, whilſt the Heir of him that cheated him, *fares Sumptuouſly and Deliciouſly every day*. He rides in his Coach, whilſt it may be, the Creditor would be glad to drive it, being brought to extremity for want of his Right. This ſometimes happens, tho' not often, for God doth, for the moſt part, ſend a temporal curſe upon the Family and Eſtate of him that hath done wrong: And when it doth happen, it commonly laſts but a little while, and when it does, it would be well for that Heir, if he would come to his Fathers Creditors and ſay to them as *Benhadad* ſaid to the

the King of *Iſrael*; *That which my Father hath taken from thee I will reſtore*, 1 *Kings*, 20. 34. I proceed to the laſt enquiry.

IV. To *Whom* muſt *Reſtitution* be made? I anſwer briefly; To the injur'd perſon, if he be alive, and can be found, and to no other. In caſe he be dead, or cannot be found, it muſt be made to thoſe to whom his perſonal Eſtate deſcended. It muſt be given to thoſe who in probability ſhould have had the benefit of it, in caſe *Reſtitution* had been made before his death. It may be given to thoſe of neareſt Kin that can be found. Prudence muſt direct in that caſe, and many more, according to various Circumſtances and Accidents. If no Relations can be found (which ſometimes happens, and eſpecially when the injury was done long before, or in a place where the injured Perſon did not inhabit, or continued but a ſhort time) The *Reſtitution* which he ſhould have had, muſt be given to ſome work of Piety or Charity. This was the rule which was preſcribed by the law of *Moſes*, *Num.* 5. 6. 4. (A place very fit to be conſidered likewiſe by thoſe who think that upon their

confeſſion and repentance to God, they may be forgiven without *Reſtitution*.) *When a man or woman ſhall commit a ſin, that men commit, to do treſpas againſt the Lord, and that perſon be guilty. Then they ſhall confeſs their ſin which they have done; and he ſhall recompence his treſpaſs with the Principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him againſt whom he hath treſpaſſed.* By that expreſſion [the ſin that men commit] we may underſtand, that he ſpeaks of thoſe common Treſpaſſes which are committed amongſt men. Some underſtand it to be meant only of a treſpaſs done. By [doing a treſpaſs againſt the Lord] we may underſtand either more generally, that every man is to conſider, that when he injures his Neighbour, he offends God; or rather he means, that the offender had prevaricated, and told that which is falſe concerning it, which is a great ſin againſt God. *Then they ſhall confeſs the ſin that they have done.* 'Tis obſervable, that the word ſignifies a more ſtrict and particular confeſſion, which a man makes (as we ſay) from the bottom of his heart, and from a very deep, and afflicting ſenſe of the wrong which he hath done. But how deep ſoever,

ever it is, it ſignifies nothing without *Reſtitution*, as appears by that which followeth: *He ſhall recompence the Treſpaſs, with the Principal part*, &c. And it follows, *verſe* 8. *But if the man have no kinſman to recompence the Treſpaſs unto, let the Treſpaſs be recompenced unto the Lord*, &c. It is concluded by ſome, that he doth not ſpeak here of a Treſpaſs which was committed againſt any of the people of *Iſrael*, becauſe none of them could be without kinſmen, but of injury done to a ſtranger: from which we may note, that there muſt be no injury done to any man, but there muſt be *Reſtitution*.

There was great care taken amongſt the *Hebrews*, of *Reſtitution*, when the injur'd perſon was dead. He who had done the wrong, was not to expect pardon, till he came to the grave of him whom he had injured, and brought ten men of his brethern along with him: and did in their preſence, ſtanding over the head of the grave, ſay; *I have ſinned againſt the Lord, and againſt this man, and have done this and this to his hurt*, naming the particular Offences; and then to make *Reſtitution* to the next of kin to him: And if he had no kinred,

it was to be *recompenced to the Lord*, and given to the Prieſt for that purpoſe.

Men ſhall not need to be at any great loſs in this matter; for it is not of ſo great concern to whom the *Reſtitution* be made (though there ought to be a due care taken concerning it) as that it *be* made, and that the perſon offended hath quitted himſelf of it. The great care of the *Ninevites*, was, that what they had deceitfully gotten, ſhould be out of their hands. It is ſuch an accurſed thing to keep that which a man hath wrongfully taken, that if it could poſſibly be ſuppoſed there were no body to give it to, he had better *throw it into the Streets*, than to keep it, and the Guilt gnawing upon his Conſcience, which is the inſeparable Concomitant of it.

I know that unjuſt men would willingly make objections againſt what I have ſaid; but I am not aware of any that are material.

1. Object. *It is poſſible that ſome may alledge a place of Scripture to excuſe* Reſtitution; *which doth moſt ſtrictly and plainly require it*, viz. Ezek. 18. 27. When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doth that which is Lawfull and Right, he

he ſhall ſave his Soul alive. *Preſumtuous ſinners catch at ſo much of this, as they think will ſerve their turns, and then run away to their ſins, as if they had a ſecurity of forgivneſs from God; but I muſt deſire them to ſtay a little and conſider theſe two things.*

1. That Repentance which the Scripture doth here, and in other places, make mention of; ſuppoſeth that there is not a delay of it till the ſinner is dying, and uncapable of living a better life.

2. He that repents, muſt do that which is right, (*i. e.*) he muſt reſtore: as is more plainly expreſt. *c.* 33. 15. before mentioned. All that the ſinner can conclude from this expreſſion, is, that whenſoever he repents and reſtores, he may be happy.

2. Object. *It may be Objected, that the Thief upon the Croſs did not Reſtore; nor did our Saviour make any mention of it.*

Anſ. The Repentance of the Thief, was by an extraordinary Grace upon an extraordinary occaſion, and therefore nothing but a deluſion can incourage the ſinner to make that to be his Example.

Our Saviour upon that extraordinary occa-

ſion (which never was before, or can be again) did infuſe that principle of Grace and Holineſs into the Soul of the Thief, by which his Nature was changed, and he would have made *Reſtitution* to the utmoſt of his power, if he had lived; for otherwiſe, he had not been capable of Salvation.

Some have been ſo vain, as to ſay, that if a Thief loſeth his life for his Offence, it is ſufficient without *Reſtitution*; But I muſt tell ſuch perſons, that he is ſentenc'd to die for the ſatisfaction of the Law (that he may be a publique example to others) and not for the ſatisfaction of him whom he hath robbed. I proceed to the laſt Enquiry.

V. What Rules and Directions, as alſo what Advice and Councel is fit to be given concerning *Reſtitution?* The Rules and Directions I would give, are only in relation to ſome ſpeciall and particular Caſes, in which thoſe that have done wrong may be at a loſs.

1. In caſe of Inability. The perſon offending muſt reſolve, and ſolemnly engage to God, that he will reſtore as he is able, and that he will uſe his utmoſt

moſt care and diligence, that he may be in a capacity to do it. If he be a true Penitent, he will take more care and pains to eaſe his guilty mind, than if it were only for neceſſary Food and Rayment for his body.

In the mean while he ſhall do well to acknowledg the Offence to the perſon whom he hath wronged (when there is not a ſpecial cauſe to the contrary) and make *Reſtitution* by degrees as he is able, or as the injur'd perſon ſhall be pleas'd to accept of it.

2. In caſe of Minority. I have known ſome who have been concerned for the common injuries, which they have done when they were children, by ſtealing fruits out of Orchards and Gardens, and things of the like nature, otherwiſe I ſhould have thought it a matter too inconſiderable to have troubl'd my Reader with it. In this and ſuch like caſes *Reſtitution* is very commendable, eſpecially where the poverty of the injured Perſon renders him an object of Pity; But it were very much to be wiſhed that Parents and Governours would take care to make Reſtitution, for their Children as ſoon as they hear complaints made of ſuch wrongs done by them.

But

But I will add as to ſuch wrongs, tho' *Reſtitution* be a great and neceſſary duty; yet it muſt not be ſo ſtrain'd to every Punctillio, as to be an occaſion of unneceſſary & cauſleſs trouble. In thoſe caſes where the common ingenuity of Mankind requires no *Reſtitution*, there is no need of making it. If I am ſatisfied, as I may in ſuch a caſe, that the man whom I injur'd when I was a Child, requires no ſatisfaction from me now, I am a man, I need not trouble my ſelf about it. If in the like manner, I take any thing from another, without asking which I am well aſſured he would readily have given me, there is no *Reſtitueion* required.

De minimis non Curat lex.

Penitents muſt have a care that they do not diſquiet themſelves about little and inconſiderable things; but be ſatisfied that they have forgiveneſs, if they are carefull in matters of moment and concern.

3. In caſe of Prejudice to the Offender, if he confeſſeth the fault, and makes *Reſtitution*, he may do it privately, ſo that it need not be known to any but God, and his own Conſcience. It ſomtimes happens, that the acknowledgment of the Offence, may prove the ruine of the Offender,

Offender; when the Perſon, to whom the *Reſtitution* is made, is diſingenuous, and unworthy in divulging of it. But in this caſe the Offender muſt conſider two things amongſt others. *1ſt.* Whether there have not been ſome extraordinary conſequential damages to him who is injured by him? As when a man is Sued at Law for the money which ſhould have been paid: Or whether it hath not hindred him of ſome advantage which he might have had. A man may be cheated at ſuch a time, when the loſs of his money amounts to more than the value of it; and in ſuch a caſe, private *Reſtitution* may not be ſufficient, becauſe the offender doth not know what he is to reſtore. *2d.* It may be that an innocent Perſon is accuſed of the wrong done, and in that caſe there may be a neceſſity of acknowleging the offence, that the blame may no longer be laid upon him that is not guilty. But in moſt caſes, private *Reſtitution* may be made, and it is very adviſeable.

The advice which I ſhall give, ſhall be General and Particular. In General, I would adviſe all men.

1. To

1. To take care that there be a true Principle of Piety and Holineſs fixed in their Hearts. He that fears God, his Neighbour ſhall not need to be afraid of him. He cannot willingly do any wrong; and if he be ſenſible of any that he hath done unawares, he will make haſt to reſtore. He is juſt and upright to all the World, and doth as well exerciſe himſelf to have a *Conſcience void of offence towards Men* as *God*. His greateſt care is for his Salvation, and he knows very well, that if he ſhould wrong his Neighbour, he ſhould *Wrong his own Soul* much more. A good Man knows that inward peace is to be preferred before all outward advantages, and therefore he will not part with the firſt for the unlawful procuring of the ſecond. Where there is true Piety there can be no doubt concerning common honeſty.

2. Adhere to the Church of *England*, and endeavour by all means to promote the Rules and Orders which it doth preſcribe. As I could eaſily ſhew there is no Eccleſiaſtical conſtitution, that tends more to the fixing and encreaſing of true Godlineſs, ſo there can be nothing ever found out, which tends more to Juſtice and Uprightneſs. If Children be duly

duly Catechiſed and Inſtructed, they muſt know, that it is their great duty *To hurt no body by word or deed, but to be true and juſt in all their dealings.* If there be care taken to bring them to *Confirmation*, and they underſtand aright, what it is to take care of their Baptiſmal Vow; This may have a very great awe upon their minds, and make them conſider that they are obliged to forſake the Devil and his Works, which they do not who defraud their Neighbour.

But that which I would chiefly mention, is the care which the Church hath taken about the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. All above the age of Sixteen are required to receive. All that receive are to give in their Names, and to be examined by their Miniſter. Now if any Man either by fraud or treſpaſs hath wronged his Neighbour, and complaint is made to the Miniſter, He hath a vaſt advantage by his Meek and Godly counſel and admonitions, to bring him to a ſenſe of the evil of what he hath done, and the neceſſity of reſtoring. He may treat with the injur'd Perſon, and make a laſting and amicable agreement amongſt them. If there be any obſtinacy,

cy, he may refuſe to give them the Sacrament, and by complaint to the Biſhop take a ſeverer courſe, where mildneſs will not prevail.

If the orders of the Church were duly obſerved, there could not be ſuch uncharitable and implacable conteſts in Courts of Judicature as now there are. It concern's the great Enemy to deſtroy the Church of *England*, that Men might become looſe, and commit all manner of Villanies in the World.

3. Take heed of being too ſtrict and ſevere in matters of Right. Some Men, though they will be juſt, yet they are very hard, which doth not become a Chriſtian Spirit. There is a ſaying which holds true in this as well as in other caſes, *He that will do as much as he may, will often times do more than he ſhould.* Religion tempers the minds of Men, ſo that they will rather ſuffer wrong, than exact the extreameſt right. When a man ſees that his Cuſtomer hath made an agreement with him, by which he is in danger of being a great loſer: If he holds him to his hard bargain, he doth not deal by him as his Brother and fellow-Member of the Body of Chriſt.

There

There is a common caſe, which I cannot forbear to mention, under this Head, and I wiſh I had but expreſſions fit to ſet forth the diſingenuity and baſeneſs of it: I mean the unreaſonable advantages which Shop-keepers, and others make of the neceſſities of Poor Tradeſmen, by not allowing them ſuch a value for their Goods, as is neceſſary for their ſubſiſtence. Nay, it may be they will not allow them ſo much as they know the Goods Coſt them, without any reſpect to their Labour; and yet make the ſame advantage to themſelves, as if they gave a valuable price. If a Poor Man or Woman comes with their Goods, the buyer perceives by a pale face, or wet eyes, or a moſt dejected and ſorrowful countenance, that they muſt be ſold, or the poor Workman muſt go to Jayle, or his Children muſt want Bread, and therefore he proffers an inconſiderable price, expecting that if they be carried away, neceſſity will force the Perſon to return and take the Money. There is a ſaying which helps Rich Men to *devour the poor: Every one will buy as cheap as they can*: But there is another ſaying of our Saviour, which muſt devour that, or it will devour the Man,

(and I cannot mention it too often) *As you would that Men ſhould do unto you, ſo do ye unto them.* This is the Law by which our Lord will Judge Men in all thoſe caſes, where there is not a particular Rule: In the mean while Men may expect temporal Judgments from God, conſidering the grievous and juſt complaints that are made by Strangers, as well as Natives: Theſe unconſcionable buyers are the cauſe of ſo much reproach and hatred, which the Poor French Proteſtants labour under. It hath occaſioned many of them to leave the Nation, and I wiſh they have not left *The duſt of their Shoes* behind them; who, inſtead of being *received*, as thoſe that are *Perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*, have been denied the moſt reaſonable reward of their Labours. And many thouſands of the moſt induſtrious Poor amongſt our ſelves are forced by this means, to make their *Tears* to be their *Meat and Drink* for want of better Proviſions. Many pretences are made, but I never yet heard any that could excuſe the Conſciences of ſuch *Hard Maſters*, to their induſtrious Workmen and Servants.

4. Take heed of doubtful caſes. A Man may do nothing but that which he hopes

hopes is right, and yet afterwards he finds that he did wrong, and what a great trouble and uneaſineſs doth this prove to his mind? He finds that he muſt make Reſtitution, but he knows not what to make, or to whom, or how to diſentangle his guilty conſcience, and get out of that ſnare which he might eaſily have kept out of. When Men have more regard to the World than they have to the rules of Juſtice and Uprightneſs; when they come to ſee that the World is nothing, and that they know not but that they may have done wrong for the obtaining of it; they have more torment than ever it afforded pleaſure to them. There are too many caſes of this nature. I will mention this one which may be of good uſe. One of the moſt Religious Women that ever I knew, parted with her whole Eſtate to her Son for the payment of his debts, and only took his Bond for an Annuity. Her Son Mortgag'd the whole Eſtate, and became unable to pay his Mother, ſo that the poor Widow had nothing to have recourſe to, but ſome Copy-hold Lands which ſhe had not ſurrendred. But the Purchaſer who lent the Money, at the requeſt of her Son, parted with

a great part of the Free-hold Land, and then forced the Widow to ſurrender the Copy-hold, (giving her a ſmall Summ of Money) by which ſhe is forced to live upon Charity. If I cannot ſay, That he did that which was unjuſt, yet I will ſay, that he did that which a good Man would not have done for the advantage of a great Eſtate.

My particular Advice ſhall be.

1. *To Rich Men.* There is an inſatiated deſire of Riches, which runs Men into the Guilt of Fraud, Violence and Oppreſſion. How inexcuſable is ſuch a Man, to whom it is not enough, that God hath dealt liberally by *him*, but he muſt deal deceitfully by his Neighbour? When he ſhould be bleſſing God for what he hath, he is cheating his Neighbour that he might have more. He is ſelling his Soul for that which belongs to his Body, although he hath no need of it; and although, it may be, he never intends to make uſe of it. He ſecures everlaſting Miſery to himſelf by the getting of it, and when he hath done (as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) He is at a loſs, *and cannot tell who ſhall enjoy it.* And this is not all,

all, but whereas he had enough which was lawfully gotten, he muſt by his injuſtice, add that which may bring a curſe upon the whole Eſtate. Our Saviour might well ſay, *How hard is it for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven!* and (according to the manner of the *Jewes*, who were wont to expreſs things that were very difficult, by things that were impoſſible) ſay, *It is eaſier for a Camel to enter through the eye of a Needle*, &c. When amongſt other things they are guilty of ſuch an unquenchable love of riches, that they care not how unjuſtly they come by them; And pride is the concomitant of wealth which makes them ſcorn to make Reſtitution, and ſo they become irrecoverably miſerable.

2. *To Poor Men.* Take heed of a temptation to Fraud or Theft. *Agur* was afraid *Leſt he ſhould be Poor and ſteal*, *Prov.* 30. 8. 'Tis a hard caſe to be Poor, but it is worſe to have a guilty Conſcience; His caſe is very ſad, who hath both of them. You are apt to envy him that is Rich; but if you be Honeſt, and he is not, he may envy you. *Better is a litle with Righteouſneſs, than great Revenues without Right*, Prov.

16. 8. *A little that a Righteous Man hath, is better than the Riches of many Wicked*, Pſal. 37. 16. If you think your ſelves miſerable in this World, you have the more reaſon to take heed of doing wrong, leſt you be forever miſerable. The pooreſt man, if he be upright, may have the feaſt of a good Conſcience, which is better than the Rich Mans *dainty Meat*. If Poor Men are diſhoneſt, they are commonly ruin'd both Soul and Body, every one is afraid of them, and that makes them run on in wicked courſes till the Gallowes happily rids the World of them.

3. *To Aged Perſons.* You are going out of the World: You are *Old and Gray-Headed*, as *Samuel* was in the foremention'd place, 1 *Sam.* 12. It is of great concern, that you ſhould examine your ſelves, whither you be as upright as he was. What a diſmal condition are ſome Aged Men in, Who looking back upon their Lives, can remember much hurt, but no good that they have done in the World? That they have been concerned in doing many injuries but car'd not for doing any kindneſſes?

But under this Head, my deſign is to

ſpeak to Aged Men with reſpect to their Relations: Parents and Maſters.

There are ſome Parents, who inſtead of bringing up their Children *in the nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, bring them up in inſtructing them how to cheat and defraud. They teach them that art which will tend to their everlaſting ruine. It is not likely, that they ſhould ever make Reſtitution, for that were to queſtion their Fathers honeſty, as well as their own. It is a dreadful thing that Parents ſhould make it their chiefeſt care, that God may curſe their Children. I have already ſhewed, that the Child fares the worſe for the fraud which his Father hath been guilty of, in that he doth thereby leave a Curſe to the Child, but in this caſe the Child knows how to bring a curſe upon himſelf, and he learnt it of his own Father. It was *Samuels* happineſs, that he could appeal to all *Iſrael* concerning his uprightneſs from his very *Childhood* to his being *Gray-headed*, 1 Sam. 12. 2. And it might be owing to the care of his Parents, in that they offer'd him to God when he was a Child, and that he then *Miniſtred to the Lord.* If Parents will take care of their Children betimes, to fix the fear of God in their minds, it will

preſerve them from Fraud and Injuſtice all their dayes.

I would ſpeak to Maſters likewiſe. You complain of your Servants being unfaithful, and it may be there was never more cauſe for ſuch a complaint, but the great queſtion is, Whether you are not the chief cauſe of it? I have great reaſon to ſay from what I have heard from Servants, whoſe guilty Conſciences have brought them to me; That it is becauſe their Maſters are deſtitute of true Piety, that the Servants are deſtitute of common Honeſty. Maſters regard not God in their Families, & that's the reaſon that Servants regard not their duties to their Maſters. And that's not all, but the great reaſon of cheating their Maſters, is that their Maſters cheat their Cuſtomers. The Servant thinks he needs not regard what wrong he does his Maſter, ſince his Maſter regards not what wrong he do to others. Or, it may be the Maſter hath learnt the Servant to defraud others, and he thinks that he may with as good a Conſcience cheat his Maſter himſelf.

4. *To Young Perſons.* Take heed of doing wrong; or if you have done it, make haſte to reſtore, that you may be at Peace, and get into the way of happineſs. 'Tis pity that thoſe that are young ſhould ſo early

early beſpeak the Curſe of God. I am confident, that there is nothing the Devil deſires more, than that young Perſons ſhould ſteal, or do wrong to others; becauſe by that he keeps them from entring into a Religious courſe, and hurries them into all exceſſes of Wickedneſs. It may be that the young Man hears ſo much of the danger of a ſinful Life, and the happineſs of being Religious, that he is almoſt perſwaded to *Flee from his youthful Luſts*, and to take care to keep the Fear of God in his mind; but he remembers that he hath done wrong, and is aſham'd to confeſs it; and it may be he is at a loſs about his making Reſtitution, and this breaks off thoſe reſolutions, which otherwiſe might have been of very happy conſequence to him. He had gotten looſe from the Power of the Devil, if he had not been catcht in that ſnare of doing wrong, which requires Reſtitution. And when he breaks off from the reſolution of Reſtoring that he may be a true Penitent, he then reſolves to drown the voice of his Conſcience, by ſinning more, and becoming more deſperate. This is oftentimes the fatal conſequence of young Mens being diſhoneſt, and unjuſt.

I would apply my ſelf chiefly to Servants, and deſire them to take care of unfaithful-

faithfulneſs. A faithful Servant is become a rare Jewel; and I am ſure, he that is unfaithful, is commonly ſo great a plague that it had been well for him, and for many others, that he had never been born.

Sometimes Servants (like *Gehazi* 2 *King*. 5.20.) go in their Maſters Name to deceive thoſe that they are concern'd with, and then they lie as *Gehazi* did, and have a worſe leproſie than he had. I have often obſerved, that there are none who live more comfortably in the World than thoſe who have been faithful and diligent Servants. Many of them come to enjoy great Eſtates; but if they do not, yet they live as contentedly in a meaner condition. Thoſe who were faithful as *Joſeph* was, to a Maſter that knew not what he had in his Houſe, (but only knew that he had a faithful Servant in it) do find that *the Lord is with them*, as he was with *Joſeph*, and that they are *Proſperous*, *Gen.* 39.2.

Some Servants are ſo Conſcientious and Faithful, that they are one of the greateſt of all temporal bleſſings to thoſe whom they ſerve. They are like *Jacob* who are ready to make good any damage which is ſuſtained by them. If their Maſters be offended, yet they can triumph in their innocency as *He* did, Gen. 31.36. *What is*

my

my treſpaſs, &c. and verſes 38, 39. *This Twenty Years have I been with Thee: Thy Ewes and thy Shee-Goats have not caſt their Young, and the Rams of thy Flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of Beaſts, I brought not unto thee: I bare the loſs of it: Of my hand didſt thou require it, whither ſtolen by day, or ſtolen by night.* This was a Servant whom God bleſſed, and likewiſe his Maſter for his ſake, *Gen.* 30. 27.

But on the other ſide, an unfaithful Servant is one who makes himſelf miſerable in this World. It is to be feared, that moſt of thoſe who come to intolerable beggary were unfaithful Servants, and there is nothing come to them but what their guilty Conſciences might long ſince threaten to them. I would expoſtulate the caſe with ſuch ſervants, and Ask them what account they can give of themſelves? 'How can you do that which is ſo baſe? '1. You are ſo far from being in the mean-'eſt rank of thoſe that are honeſt, that you 'are the worſt of Thieves; other Thieves 'when they have robbed, run away, but 'you ſtay to be maintain'd by him whom 'you robb. I would ask, 2. What you do 'with that which you ſteal from your 'Maſters? I dare ſay, you do not expect it 'ſhould enrich you: You lay up nothing

'but

'but the guilt and torment of it in your 'Conſciences. You have caſt off the Fear 'of God, and are become Servants of the 'Devil, and you robb your Maſters to bear 'the charge of it. I would ask, 3. How 'you think to get rid of that guilt and ter- 'rour which is in your Conſciences: You 'may live fifty or threeſcore years, and 'upon all occaſions of evil that you either 'feel or fear, your robbing your Maſter 'will come into your mind, and moſt of all 'when you are going out of the World; 'what death ſoever you dye.

I will conclude my diſcourſe with two or three Motives or Encouragements to *Reſtitution*, that thoſe who have done wrong, may not continue in an Impenitent ſtate.

1. Conſider that *Reſtitution* is not unfecible, but may be made. There is no ſinner, but may obtain Mercy from God upon his Repentance and Amendment. Nor is there any ſin which a man hath committed; but if he have the Grace to Repent, he may get rid of the Guilt, and puniſhment of it. I know that in ſome caſes *Reſtitution* is much more difficult than in others: but yet there is no caſe which renders it impoſſible, but that it may be ſo, made as that

that the offender may be ſatisfied.

'Tis poſſible, that a man hath ſpent his life in Cheating and Defrauding, and doth not know one of a hundred whom he hath injured. It is poſſible likewiſe, that he is worth but little, in compariſon of the wrong that he hath done: (moſt deceivers becoming very poor) yet, for all this, he may be happy. He may Reſtore to as many as he knows, if he be able; and according as his Miniſter ſhall adviſe, give to Pious and Charitable uſes in lieu of the wrong done to thoſe whom he knows not. And if he be poor, he may proffer to give what he hath, to them whom he hath injured, and it is ſufficient. *According to the ſubſtance muſt the* Reſtitution *be*, *Job* 20. 18. The difficulty of their Salvation who have done wrong, conſiſts chiefly in their unwillingneſs to *Reſtitution*, becauſe of that ſhame that attends it, and that Poverty which they think will enſue to them, and their Families. Therefore.

2. As *Reſtitution* may be ſo made, as to be accepted of God; ſo there is great encouragement to it from the common ingenuity of men. Thoſe that have done wrong, and their Conſciences are afflicted for it, do find *Merciful Men* as well as

a *Merciful God*. I have often been concerned both for Rich and Poor that have offended, and never met with any but were willing to forgive the Poor that *Reſtitution* which was due from them, and to be as kind to the Rich as they themſelves could deſire, taking but part of it, and giving the remainder either to the Reſtorer or to the Poor. Every man is ready to pity him that is tormented in his mind, and is more ready to rejoyce that he is turned from the evil of his doings, and become Penitent, than they are to make ſevere demands.

3. There is not ſo much trouble in Reſtoring, as there is Peace and Tranquillity of mind after it. Whilſt the guilt remains, whatever the gain be, yet as 'tis ſaid in *Job* c. 20. 20. *He doth not feel quietneſs in his Belly*. He hath a dreadful Chollick within him, a grievous torment in his Conſcience, and (at *v.* 18.) *He cannot rejoyce therein*. But when Reſtitution is made, there is quietneſs and rejoycing. The Man is in his right mind; cur'd of a Malady which he would not be troubled with for all the advantages which Men get honeſtly, much leſs for thoſe which are gotten by Fraud, or Violence. No queſtion but ſometimes torment of the Mind brings languiſhing

ing or violent diſtempers upon the body, and in thoſe caſes there's no Phyſick but *Reſtitution*, that will cure.

I will give one inſtance, among many, which may encourage men to Reſtore, from what I have ſaid in theſe two laſt particulars. I was deſir'd to viſit a Woman in ſuch a very violent diſtemper, that I did not Imagin ſhe could have lived beyond the next day: When I examin'd her, as I do all, what her converſation had been towards God and men; ſhe told me that ſhe was extreamly troubled for wrong done to her Maſter, with whom ſhe had lived many years before, by taking Money out of his Box in his Shop. It was a great aggravation of her grief, that ſhe knew her Maſter to be a very moroſe man, and one who would be extreamly impatient, and never forgive her. I promis'd, that I would viſit him, and acquaint him of what had happen'd to him, and that I did not doubt but I ſhould find him, as I had done all others, ready to forgive, ſince he knew that ſhe was unable to Reſtore. Accordingly I went to him, and when I related the matter to him, (though I found him troubled & aſtoniſh't at it, becauſe of the confidence he had of

of her faithfulneſs beyond others, yet) he was not only ready to forgive her, but of his own accord moſt Worthily and Chriſtianly proferr'd to go to her and aſſure her of it. I then thought that the next news would be that ſhe died in peace; but it pleaſed God, that upon the eaſe of her mind ſhe imediately recovered. The guilt of having done wrong, is like a bone out of joynt, which is alwayes very painful till it be ſet again; Reſtitution muſt be made, if there be ability; and humble acknowledgment if there be not, and then the Bone is ſet: The mind is freed from a trouble which all the World could neither cure, nor yet recompence. If therefore Men have done wrong, let them make no delayes, but let me deſire them as *Nehemiah* did the *Jewes*, Chap. 5. 11. *Reſtore I pray you even* THIS DAY that which you have unjuſtly taken away.

And as to thoſe to whom this Treatiſe is uſeleſs; let them bleſs God for it, that no Temptation hath made them guilty of ſuch a tormenting and entangling Sin by which they might have brought evil upon themſelves and their Poſterity.

And let me deſire theirs, and all good Mens Prayers to Almighty God, that the little pains which I have taken in this Publication, may tend to His Glory, and the Good of thoſe for whom it was intended: which I pray God to grant, Through *JESUS CHRIST* our Lord, *Amen.*

FINIS.

Books by the ſame Author, *Viz.*

The Unworthy Non-Communicant.
The Benefit of Early Piety.
The Spirit of Meekneſs.

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